The
COMMONWEAL
A Weekly Review of Literature the Arts and Public Affairs
FOUNDED BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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Week by Week

"PEACE in justice and charity. . . . To foster and establish it on secure foundations of law and teachings of the Gospel. . . . That God may sustain in those who govern confidence in the pacific ways of negotiations and of lasting agreements." Several utterances were given to the world last week which will be remembered for their effect on history. A few will be remembered as notable in themselves—among them surely President Roosevelt's urgent second appeal to the German Chancellor. But there was another utterance, more remarkable still, which also pointed a way: the first way which should be sought, perhaps the only way which will finally be left to seek—the way of "undaunted and insistent prayer" for "peace in justice and in charity." It is not true, of course, that the peoples did not turn to God last week; there was supplication throughout the world as the terror came close, and who can doubt that whatever is good in the accord was granted in response to that supplication? But no one will be found anywhere, we think, to describe this as a "peace of justice and charity." Those words, wrung from the suffering heart of the aged Pontiff of Christendom, remain a high challenge to mankind. For fear is not enough. Only when justice and charity enter the universal plea for peace which men send up to the Father of us all, will the "agreements be lasting" and the peace be "established on a secure foundation."

Prayer for Peace

NO ONE in any country feels that the Munich settlement finally settles anything. It doesn't settle the East European problem or separate that problem from Western Europe, and it doesn't clear up ideological differences. It was impossible to feel during the heat of the crisis that a war could have brought any sort of lasting—and still less, any good—solution (and for admitting that, one applauds Chamberlain); but the same reasons which caused that feeling prevent a settlement by current fear of war. Muddling backward has a strictly limited value. There remains the same competition among the western powers. If Russia or France withdraws from their treaty this year, the same situation will prevail as before. They came together in the first place by interest; it was a reactionary French government which made the agreement. Especially after the crisis one can see how easily they would be maneuvered again to their old position in the teeth of another storm. Increasing the power of the axis makes their cooperation more and not less sure. It would take a more naive group than the British Tories to feel they have appeased Hitler or settled the problem of fascist expansion. The arms race must be led by England and France. Restriction of armament will be considered an aid to the dictators. The question of Spain is immediate. Italy and France say they are going to get together and that involves another attempt to clear up the Peninsula. Perhaps finally Spain will have forced upon it "the pacific ways of negotiations and of lasting agreements." The most searching practical question is what are we going to do about treaties. No treaty now standing is worth much more than the ribbon and seals which decorate it. To make them worth anything America, for one, must do more than preach. To make them as powerful as a dictator's frown or a communist's insinuation, something like the League of Nations should have been, must now begin to be. The ultimate question still lies in the relative internal developments of the various régimes —including our own.

Pause after Munich

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THE JOINT pastoral letter signed by all the members of the German hierarchy, recently published in the Catholic and the secular press, is a disheartening indication that the Church today is having even greater difficulty maintaining its existence under the Nazi régime. The bishops say point blank that persecution is increasing. To date the holding of religious services has not been prevented as in Loyalist Spain and Soviet Russia, but the Nazis are utilizing various methods to secure "the uprooting of Christianity in general and the introduction of a faith that no longer has the least relation to belief in God and the Christian belief in a future life." Some means are violent, such as the tearing down of crosses, the destruction of Catholic books and writings, indulgence in scurrilous verbal attacks on the Pope, the hierarchy and the Church in general. Others are more insidious, like the immorality trials of the clergy, the dissemination of slanderous rumors and rigid censorship, as well as the official teaching of false historical doctrines and the scorning of ethical principles. Increasing discrimination against students and fathers of families who profess their faith clearly demonstrates how livelihood itself is completely at the disposal of the State. The bishops' letter is an exhortation to courage, a plea for the Christian solidarity of prayer and charity. It is a positive assurance to their people that they will not agree to the slightest "diminution of our religious doctrine" or the "abandonment of the rights of the Church." It also serves as a stirring appeal to more fortunate Christians over here for persistent prayer and generous financial assistance.

Plight of Our German Brothers

THE OLD saw that American business or "the American system" is alone responsible for the world's highest material standard of living is being presented in a new version, if one is to judge from the recent International Management Congress or such enterprising business organs as *Fortune* and *Business Week*. The former organ is painfully aware that the public views business as such with considerable suspicion. In fact, *Fortune* seems to think that business is laboring under an inferiority complex when its potentialities warrant comparison with the "esthetic achievement of Athens, the political achievement of [ancient] Rome and the religious achievement of the Middle Ages." *Business Week* tells of Johns-Manville electing a representative of the public to the Board of Directors, of Mr. Chrysler talking to his men individually and lending them special tool sets for their sons, of the benevolent paternalism of George F. Johnson, the shoe manufacturer, of provision for appeal from the decisions of the foreman and of accurate tests of public opinion. Much of the emphasis in this advice to executives is sound, stressing as it does the paramount importance of human relations, insisting upon performance instead of generous promises and urging that public relations should begin at home. The future of American business largely depends on the direction of its increasingly strenuous public relations efforts. Either the most skilful technique will be used to defeat social legislation, overpublicize the management's case in various labor disputes and in general put up a good front; or else it can be the outward expression of a transformation toward genuinely human, just and harmonious relations in American business.

Public and Human Relations

SO HAPPY a prospect should not mislead us into thinking that business and industrial peace is just around the corner. There are still plenty of corporate and individual enterprises which prefer the hard-boiled way, the way of deception, if not of outright defiance. The general monopoly investigation, through Senator O'Mahoney, continues to insist upon the essentially objective, scientific and pacific nature of its undertakings. Meanwhile the Federal Trade Commission continues making complaints against individual companies; the latest is that directed at National Biscuit, alleging that competition has been prevented and trade unreasonably restrained by the use of arbitrary kick-backs and discounts. In Chicago, Federal District Attorney Martin L. Igoe has just sought to have an officer of Borden-Weiland—local subsidiary of what has been called the world's largest milk and milk products company—punished for contempt of court because of his "contumacious" refusal to give any testimony whatever before the Grand Jury on a charge of price-fixing and monopoly. The District Attorney accused Borden of "doing everything it can in New York and Chicago to obstruct the government milk monopoly investigation." Perhaps the lamb may be forgiven if it is not yet willing to accept the lion's invitation to share beds.

Lambs and Lions

THE MOST conspicuous lion of the moment, though a lion certainly no longer in his prime, lacking several of his teeth, and generally in a mangy condition, is the railroads. One cannot help having a great deal of sympathy for the railroads in their present plight. They labor under what must be most discouraging limitations. They are the natural and almost helpless prey of all tax makers. They are forced to compete with other carriers which pay little or no taxes and which are even, in some cases, subsidized by government. Some indication of how crippling this competition is was given by

An Old Gray Mare

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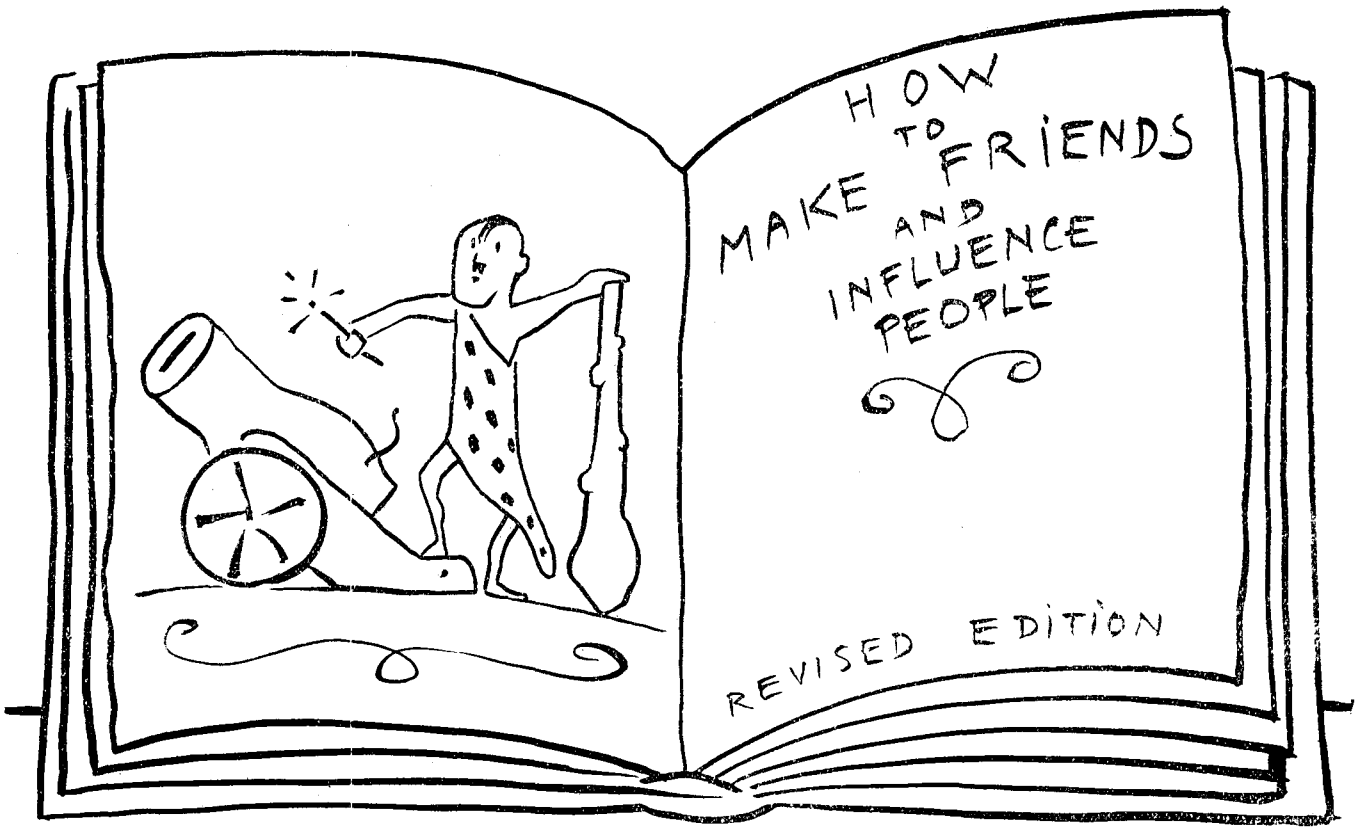

"Not for Children"

one effect of the trucking strike: the freight handled by the New York Inland Freight Terminal increased 400 percent. And, bitterest limitation of all, the Interstate Commerce Commission has, by its refusal of one application, made it clear that it will not allow the roads to operate truck freight lines of their own. Yet one cannot teach an old dog new tricks. As John T. Flynn shows in the *New Republic* (and elsewhere), railroads have continued into the present their devious and costly and speculative financial maneuverings; if they have ceased for the moment, it is probably only for lack of opportunity. Moreover, with one of the principal contentions of labor in the present hearings before the President's fact-finding board one can only agree—that capacity to pay must not supply the criterion for establishing rates of pay.

Mediation and Education

WITH the annual convention of the AFL in progress at Houston, Texas, the President made another move to encourage negotiation, mediation, arbitration in industrial ranks, by asking the AFL to keep open the road to meet the CIO. It is most optimistic to look for productive cooperation between employers and employees when the ranks of labor are themselves divided and recalcitrant as at present. There are undoubtedly things about which negotiation and compromise are impossible or wrong. The tendency now seems to be to make the field of these absolutes too broad. In the material and economic sphere there ought not to be many last stands. Neither the AFL nor the CIO seems to be based on charters or plans or programs that should rule out arrangement between the two, yet they have been moving almost as fast as possible in the opposite direction from agreement. The President should try still harder, before the convention called by the CIO, to bring them together. The unions' main job is to meet the owners and management of business and to work with them toward an acceptable evolution of industry, securing increasing justice for their members and benefits to the community. The union quarrel unquestionably impedes all this. While that quarrel has been developing, some sounder progress has been taking place. Increasingly the unions have been stressing education. The Steel Workers Organizing Committee's summer school camp was added this year to the educational establishments of labor. Schooling is a good substitute for the picket line. No one should want labor to throw away its dignity and just rights through sentimental sympathy for stock and bond owners, nor can we want manage-

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ment to throw business into a sweet mess by adopting blind and ineffectual generosity toward labor demands; but as reason is called upon to clarify the actual issues and arrange them in proper order and devise methods for working on them, we can feel more hopeful for the future.

The Mystery of Suffering

IN SAYING a word about what is called "mercy killing"—a type of crime evidently on the increase—we are not referring to any one case, in which weakness, sentimentality or mere imitativeness may enter to an unknown degree. We are considering the "mercy death" for what it is in essence—almost the test challenge to Christian teaching. It touches upon the one mystery of life to which, outside that teaching, there is no answer: suffering. Hence it is not enough to tell the "mercy killer" that life is sacred and the private individual may not destroy it. He is moved to his deed not in the austere atmosphere of general truth but in the tormenting stringency of particular conditions which seem to him unbearable. Such a man, unable to endure another's anguish, though he might endure his own, willing to risk the law's penalty to end that anguish, speaks with the authority of love, however insufficient and tragically confused; he must be answered in his own terms. And it is only Christ Who can answer him. For Christ has another law, particularizing the law of the sacredness of life: the law of the sacredness, the preciousness, the merit, of suffering. Suffering is not to the Christian, as to the Buddhist, the evil proof of the evil nature of present personal life; properly endured, it is the secret, even the treasure, of present personal life, the proof of love, the seed of healing and grace here, of joy and stature in the life to come. This is, of course, a mystery; it does not, and cannot, dismiss human anguish with a formula. But it makes it possible to bear that human anguish, even when it is unbearable. From the beginning, Christ's true followers have preached the ineffable commerce in which Redeemer and redeemed mingle and exchange suffering endured for love. That is why He and He alone can put a term to that suffering, for He and He alone knows when its work is done.

Reading and Writing, But No Arithmetic

By AGNES REPPLIER

THAT reading is the pleasure which costs the least and lasts the longest has been always acknowledged, but acknowledged without acclaim. When Anne Thackeray was a little girl she awoke to the fact that her small friends and acquaintances were snatched away from her at the imperious will of adults; but that the children in books—in Miss Edgeworth's stories for example—remained where they belonged, and could be relied on for companionship.

This is the triumph of print over the more exhilarating pleasure of conversation. It is attainable and it is sure. We all have our favorite authors, and we are as faithful to them as to our friends. We reread them as indefatigably as we revisit our friends. We wonder at the stupidity of seemingly intelligent people who are blind to their perfection. If we are generous, we lament this blindness, and regret the loss it entails. If, like Augustine Birrell, we are disposed to hoard rather than to share our intellectual riches, we are glad that a just Heaven has been pleased to deny to men and women who are far ahead of us in this blundering world a few small keen delights that spell our compensation.

Bacon who read vastly knew that reading could take us only part way on our road to knowledge, and only a few steps on our longer road to wisdom. We know our letters because we have been taught them early in life, and much against our will. But we do not know what to do with them; and, after floundering about in an ocean of print, we learn to follow the line of least resistance, and float in with the tide. When a book is published we wait until a mounting wave of popularity warns us that it may be difficult to get it from the public library. The painful alternative of buying it is not to be considered, and we cannot borrow because all our friends are following our prudent course. We remember how recklessly Charles Lamb, who was a poor man, bought the books he wanted to read; but Lamb was content to do without non-essentials—which we call luxuries—for the sake of essentials, which for him were books.

Some men are born that way, which is a good thing for writers, who otherwise would be liable to starvation. Mark Pattison bought books as he bought food and drink. He had a vague—and erroneous—notion that other men did the same. When he discovered his mistake he expressed a naive concern. It never occurred to him that books can be borrowed more readily than bread and beef, and that they are generally to be found in other hands than their owners. The notion that they belong to those who love them best was not confined to Lamb.

Saint Jerome tells us that when he went into the desert he gave up kith and kin and, what was much more difficult, the habit of good living. But his books he took with him. His hermitage was sufficient for their needs, and he could not bring himself to forego the pleasure of their company.

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Catholic Biblical Association of America

By JOHN E. STEINMUELLER

SATURDAY, January 18, 1936, was a momentous day for Catholic Scripture scholars in the United States. About a dozen of them met at the Sulpician Seminary in Washington, D. C., at the invitation of Bishop Edwin V. O'Hara, D.D., chairman of the Episcopal Committee on the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. The meeting was called to discuss the advisability of a revision of the English New Testament. A definite plan of organization for this project was effected, the work of this revision was distributed among twenty-five biblical scholars and all the principles to govern this revision were thoroughly discussed. Before this meeting adjourned the late Dr. Romain Butin, S.M., professor of oriental languages at the Catholic University, proposed for the consideration of those present the opportuneness of forming a permanent association of Catholic Scripture scholars. Needless to say, this suggestion met with spontaneous and universal approval, for such an organization had been the latent desire of many Scripture professors in this country. Bishop O'Hara was delighted with the plan and offered the patronage of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine as an aid in the organization of the association.

With a view toward establishing such an association invitations were sent to about 140 Scripture scholars to attend a meeting at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, October 3, 1936, under the patronage of Cardinal Hayes. Forty-six attended this first meeting. At the morning session the members of the editorial board led a general discussion on the various aspects of the revision of the New Testament. In the afternoon session, after all those present unanimously voted for the establishment of the Catholic Biblical Association of America, Dr. Butin, drawing from his large experience as a member of many biblical and oriental societies, presented a tentative plan for the organization of such an association. Officers were elected and empowered to draw up the constitution and by-laws to be presented for approval at the next general meeting.

A general meeting was held at St. Louis on October 9 and 10, 1937, under the patronage of Archbishop Glennon. At that meeting the association could boast of about 100 active members, who either because of their special studies or teaching office had enrolled. Above all it was gratifying to know that eleven members of the hierarchy also had become charter members. Cardinal O'Connell, Cardinal Hayes, Bishop Molloy of Brooklyn and Bishop O'Hara of Great Falls honored the association by becoming its patrons. Since this general meeting at St. Louis and the publication of its proceedings, many members of the hierarchy have manifested appreciation and approval of the purpose and work of the association.

The purpose of the Catholic Biblical Association is twofold. (1) Primary: To place at the disposal of the Episcopal Committee on the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine a body of men qualified for the investigation of biblical problems. (2) Secondary: To promote a better acquaintance among our Scripture scholars, to secure mutual encouragement and support in the biblical field, and to afford the laity an opportunity to cooperate in the advancement and diffusion of biblical knowledge. The association interests itself in all branches of learning connected with the study of the Sacred Scriptures, and in the popularization of scriptural knowledge.

The Catholic Biblical Association within the short period of its establishment has won recognition both here and abroad for its scholarly activity.

The proposed revision of the English New Testament is based on the Vulgate and done with the Challoner-Rheims version (using the Greek text for clarification); it will be ready in a year or two. Obsolete words and forms (except "thee," "thou" and "thine" and related verb forms) are being eliminated, and long, involved sentences in the original broken up in accordance with the genius of modern English. The current, familiar text is followed as much as is consonant with the ends in view. Each book of the New Testament will contain a brief preface to assist the average reader to understand the book better. The brief footnotes will be restricted chiefly to important variant readings and obscure passages. The text itself is being arranged in paragraphs instead of the present verse form, and the verse and chapter enumerations are being placed in the margin. In a type different from the text itself main divisions and subdivisions are indicated. A supplementary volume to the biblical text will be in the form of a one-volume commentary on the New Testament that can be conveniently used for study clubs and discussion groups.

The ground and spade work for the revision of the English Old Testament is now in progress. A revision of the Old Testament translation presents special difficulties, greater, perhaps, than in the case of the New Testament. The difficulties of the undertaking will appear very clear when we recall the composite character of the Vulgate, the official Latin text of the Church, which must be

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the basis of the revision. For instance, Saint Jerome's third and last translation of the Psalms, direct from the Hebrew, though superior to the other texts, was not adopted by the Church.

The first publication of the association entitled "The Proceedings of the First General Meeting (St. Louis)" received most favorable reviews both here and abroad. It consists of an Introduction by Bishop O'Hara and the following scholarly papers read at the meeting: "Nova et Vetera" by Very Reverend Thomas Plassmann, O.F.M.; "Revision of the Hebrew Text of the Pentateuch" by Reverend Romain Butin, S.M.; "Early Revisions of the Septuagint" by Very Reverend W. J. McGarry, S.J.; "Recent Developments in the Study of Early Revisions of the Greek Gospels" by Reverend Matthew Stapleton; "The Vulgate, The Official Latin Text" by Reverend Wendell S. Reilly, S.S.; "Saint Jerome's Revision of the Old Latin N.T." by Reverend Aloys H. Dirksen, C.PP.S.; "Critical Principles Governing Some Early English N.T. Translations" by Reverend John E. Steinmueller; "Principles Governing the Revision of the Douay-Rheims N.T." by Reverend William L. Newton; "Revision of the Douay-Rheims O.T." by Reverend Edward P. Arbez, S.S. This publication also contains a historical sketch of the association, its constitution and officers as well as short biographies of its members.

The program of the general meeting at Hartford, October 1 and 2, 1938, unlike its predecessor which was restricted to the consideration of the biblical text, embraces a wider field of interest. The following papers, which will be eventually published by the association, were read: "The Eschatological Discourse" by Reverend Anthony C. Cotter, S.J.; "The Essence of the Mass and Scripture" by Very Reverend John A. Mc Hugh, O.P.; "One Crowd of Women Went to Grave" by Reverend Edward A. Mangan, C.SS.R.; "The Consequent Sense" by Reverend Charles R. De Vine, C.SS.R.; "The Seventy Weeks of Daniel" by Reverend Michael J. Gruenthaner, S.J.; "The Relation of the Scripture Professor to Discussion Clubs" by Reverend John F. Rowan; "The Newly Proposed Translation of Genesis, 2, 5-6," by Reverend William H. McClellan, S.J.; "The Study of Scripture in the Seminary" by Reverend Edward J. Byrne.

The Catholic Biblical Association of America is well aware of its important mission and its excellent reputation. Our ambition it is to edit a *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* as a further contribution to Catholic Action in the United States. There is not a dearth of material or competent scholars for such an ambitious plan and enterprise, but the lack of associate members and other contributors may defer its publication for the time being. The association from its very beginning enjoyed the interest and guidance of Bishop O'Hara. As a section of the Confraternity of Christian doctrine it has won the immediate confidence and support of the hierarchy of this country.

The active members of the Catholic Biblical Association of America recognize the need of perfect cooperation as one of the most powerful means and weapons of scriptural defense. They also understand fully the importance of Pope Leo's words in the "Providentissimus Deus": "For there is nothing which We believe to be more needful than that truth should find defenders more powerful and more numerous than the enemies it has to face; nor is there anything which is better calculated to impress the masses with respect for truth than to see it boldly proclaimed by learned and distinguished men."

Reading and the European Crisis

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

IT IS not exactly pharisaical these days to be grateful that one is not a radio news commentator. Fancy being a man face to face with jarring dispatches fifteen minutes old, the contents of which he understands as little as the rest of us do, and supposed to "interpret" here and now just what these words charged with mystery and fate may mean. How could one help being driven to say that it would seem to appear to seem that almost anything was likely to occur? Perhaps Hitler has found the long lost pair of seven league boots. Or maybe Mussolini will urge all Fascists to burn Japanese lanterns in their sitting-rooms. Who knows?

As this is being written we hover on the brink of war. It is not pleasant to think of all the young men gone from Prague, or of the boys from Gascony asleep along the Rhine. But the European crisis to which the present situation is a kind of finale is an old crisis, and about this much has been written. One can come relatively close to understanding it, if one takes the requisite pains, and so be prepared in spirit at least for whatever may happen. There are in the main three channels down which the crisis has come. The first and by all odds the most important is theological unsettlement, as witness the fact that Adolf Hitler is primarily an amateur theologian. The second is political and social maladjustment, often the consequences of economic disarray. The third is

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utopianism, as old as the human race, valuable as a critique of prevailing collective ethics, but always inimical to reason and peace.

In so far as the first is concerned one may risk a broad generalization and say that what has occurred is fairly obvious. During two centuries, a dominant Protestantism so liberalized and hollowed out religious belief that finally, in the wake of Hegel, there was nothing left of Christianity but the humanitarian impulse. Charity, utterly secularized and turned over to the State, found its ablest champion in Karl Marx. Meanwhile something cognate in nature was taking place on Catholic soil. For a long time this went relatively unnoticed. Then a brace of dictators completely secularized and turned over to the State the concept of hierarchy and sacred authority to which the Church had given life. Great Protestants from Hamann to Law and Kierkegaard saw the trend and warned against it. Catholics, too, realized what was happening in their own domain. It will do us good right now, as we wrestle with the phenomenon of Hitler, to read all we can get our hands on of Léon Bloy and his numerous disciples, from Jacques Maritain to that absorbing young Dutchman, Pieter van der Meer de Walcheren, whose autobiography will I trust soon appear in English. For Bloy was an ultra-sensitive barometer sensing the weather of the future and acting meanwhile, of course, as human barometers usually do.

Thus in the end one corruption of Christianity faced another corruption across the barriers of Europe. Essentially the alignment is as old as the Reformation, indeed even older than that. Of course there are numerous aspects of the development, but almost all the newer religious and philosophical literature veers round these twin symbols of secularization. Protestant writers still struggle to prevent the verities of religion from being engulfed in the humanitarian tide. You may start with the difficult books which Dr. Horton has translated from the German of Karl Barth, or you may begin with a few copies of the *Church Times*. The result will be substantially the same, excepting for the amount of headache one is likely to acquire. Catholic writers—and one may venture to say, even the Church itself—have waged a desperate fight to save the doctrine of the sacredness of human personality from destruction by a gross caricature of Divine authority. On the general topic there are three challenging, I had almost said indispensable, books: Gonzague de Raynold's "Europe tragique," a searching inquiry by one of Switzerland's ablest Catholic laymen; George Bernanos's "Mille Cimitières sous la Lune," which is rather shocking and seemingly extreme but which remains none the less so brilliant a recapitulation of Bloy and Péguy for readers of 1938 that one simply cannot read it too often; and Joseph Roth's "Antichrist," copies of which ought to be distributed free at every church door.

If you are interested in the special topic of Hitlerism from this point of view you may read (in addition to the books by Kolnai, Gurian and Shuster) the excellent brochures published regularly by the Friends of Europe in London. These last are usually written from the Anglican or Protestant point of view, because the financial support needed comes in the main from these sources; but I have seen none which Catholics might not welcome. They are the most ably edited and most objective contributions to the study of Hitlerism as a religion now appearing in English. And if one is to study that Hitlerism scientifically at all, one must approach it as a form of heterdox faith. If one doesn't, the results are woefully meager, as witness Professor Clifford Kirkpatrick's "Nazi Germany: Its Women and Family Life," useful as a sociological essay but conceivable without any mention of Hitler's name. Readers of German may, of course, read the able Catholic emigré papers, *Deutscher Weg* and *Der Deutsche in Polen*.

On the subject of political and social madadjustment as they have affected Europe, I am going to hazard the guess that few of the books written since 1933 are of enduring value. The student will find heaps of monographs descriptive of every single ill, and of every proposed remedy. But things have slid down hill much too fast for any book to be in close touch with the parade. Of course there are many brilliant and useful treatises — Geoffrey Garratt's "Mussolini's Roman Empire," for example, or (within limits) Robert Brady's "The Spirit and Structure of German Fascism." But it seems to me, and I make the statement quite humbly, that the reader who really wants to see what has been happening during the past six years and what is happening now will subscribe to *Le Temps* and the *London Economist*. Then he will read as many back numbers as he can. The *Temps* is by all odds the best newspaper in Europe today. Its editorials ought to be skipped, but it has more sound news than can be collected from all other European sources combined. The London *Economist* has run amuck now and then, but on the whole there is no journal in the world which has a comparable record. If you were to follow this advice—I know you won't —you would probably say at the end that you were more bewildered than you ever believed possible. But still I sincerely believe that some such course of reading is the only road toward a knowledge of what "Quadragesimo Anno" is all about.

We come now to the prevalent utopianism, and concerning this I should like to quote a few words out of a book somebody might well write. To it I shall contribute the following anecdote. Upon returning from Europe to my own tranquil com-

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munity, I discovered the word "Jew" and a swastika painted on a sidewalk. What had happened was this: a house had been rented to a prosperous and cultivated Jewish merchant. Thereat an Orangeman—of all people!—was sorely offended, and started a campaign which happily got no farther than the sign on the sidewalk, but even so left a record of what seems to be happening these days somewhere in America and everywhere in Europe. Utopias of days gone by were based on dreams of the millennium which would cause the lion to lie down with the lamb, of the brotherhood of all men, of strife dispelled by the purring of celestial harp music. Now Utopia is a restricted residential district. Man is to recognize as his equals only those who speak the same language, follow the same leader, give the same salute, and look alike.

The greatest and most readable authority on this utopianism is Professor Carlton J. H. Hayes. If any writer can tell you why the Jews are to trek back to Palestine and why all the Czechs are supposed to get out of Eger, it is he. But there is one able and provocative book which this topic suggests that merits reading just now. It is "Europe and the German Question," by F. W. Foerster. Much can be said in legitimate criticism of this work, but much of it has come tragically true. It deserves a wide and careful audience.

A word may, perhaps, be added by way of a general warning. When the World War of 1914 broke out, Americans generally were far more provincial than they are now. They had recollections of fruitful university days spent abroad, or priceless memories of a honeymoon on the Riviera or in Venice. But the political and economic problems of the Old World did not seep deeply into the national consciousness. Indeed it is far more probable that American ideas on these topics affected Europe than that European ideas concerning them affected us. The influence of Admiral Mahan was incomparably greater as an item of intellectual exchange than was the influence of Karl Marx.

Today the situation appears to be different. We have done a great deal of business in Europe. We have used its libraries and interviewed its leading men. We have sat all night in its cafés, listening to agitated talk. It would seem that we ought to be prepared for realism. To a certain extent we are. Informed public opinion in the United States has followed developments far more intelligently, one thinks, than has public opinion in England. At bottom, however, we are, collectively speaking, hardly more *en rapport* with European realities than was the adult generation of 1914. We transfer American ideas and ideals into situations having no historical or actual connection with these ideas and ideals. It is natural, for example, that Protestants should react more violently against Fascism than Catholics do, and that Catholics generally should get more excited about tendencies toward a communistic humanitarianism. On the other hand, nobody is so fanatically fascist as a Protestant trying to save himself from secularism, and nobody flirts more outrageously with communism than does a specific kind of awakened Catholic intellectual.

These differences are complex and important. They make much of what is written unscientific and banally emotional. I venture to say that many of our recent books on European problems reveal to a careful reader just where the authors have spent their evenings and with whom they have talked. Nothing is more chastening than a survey of what Intourist got scores of gullible Americans to say; and judging by recent specimens, it appears that a kind of Franco Spain Intourism is causing almost equal havoc among American Catholics. On lesser matters our thinking is often similarly emotional. Take for instance a great deal of what is written about the Treaty of Versailles as the cause of our present woes. I make no brief for that treaty. But surely it is obvious that as soon as there was a great war there had to be some such treaty. The fateful evil was not that the Versailles document was written but that it was not revised. And we have not yet got round, if the majority of our commentators are any criterion, to seeing that the principal reason why there was no revision was the kind of politics played in the United States during the twenty years that followed the coming of peace.

In short, it is well to be on guard. Not even a big bibiography is any guarantee that a given treatise is a safe pilot to the harbor of truth. There are, however, certain reasons for believing that a number of fundamental issues are understood. On these issues popular instinct in the United States is still so sound that it may see us through the crisis. It is the business of the critical intellect to safeguard that instinct if it can.

Prayer of an Exile

Is this Thy will, O Lord, that wrenches me
  Out, in the rigorous winter, from the field
  Where Thy warm hand has planted me, the shield
That Thou hast laid deep on the roots of me,
Where I have striven through the colored clay,
  Borne to be thwarted by a stone—concealed
  My blind, my patient toil—all overmealed
With warm brown soil from Thy eternity?
Gently, pray, wrest me from Thy Garden. Heed
  The wounds I bear in veins Thou wov'st in me.
    This flesh is weak that Thou hast made me of:
  Thy arm is power. Teach me but to see
    How—if I bear Thee meekly—here Thy love
Builds the same blossoms from a harder seed.

WILLIAM H. FANNING.

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Three Trends of the Hour

By BROTHER LEO

JOURNALISTIC criticism, when really criticism and not mere book gossip and literary reporting, helps us to appreciate the changing winds of intellectual doctrine, the veering currents in the esthetic seas. Even at its worst, journalistic criticism reflects the book fashions of the hour. Significant, I think, is a recent issue of the *Saturday Review of Literature* (September 10, 1938) which contains three review articles vastly different in tone and spirit from critical dicta of, say, ten years since. One, by the former editor of the *Saturday Review,* Mr. Henry Seidel Canby, in surveying the novels of Ellen Glasgow, defends the tradition of non-clinical fiction.

> Our three most eminent practitioners of the classic art of novel writing [Miss Glasgow, Mrs. Wharton and Miss Cather] have proved that the novelist does not have to be a journalist, or sociologist, or a psychologist, but only a master of narrative.

Mr. Canby assumes the correctness of a definition of the novel once given by his Yale colleague, William Lyon Phelps: "A good story well told."

In the second article another college man, Mr. Howard Mumford Jones, reviewing the latest book by Miss Mazo de la Roche, points out the necessity of pattern, of design. Entitled "Why Not Try Plot?" the contribution lays the failure of numerous novelists to the formlessness of their work:

> Granted that the Victorian novel too often borrowed the false trappings of the theatre . . . may not one legitimately ask our novelists to ponder once more the problem of formal plot? The modern novel has so lost form, has experimented so wildly, that no human being can say what a novel is. . . . The revolution in the novel won by realism was in its way a necessary reform, but the victory is won, and it is time to consider what was lost as well as what was gained in that conflict.

The third reviewer, N. L. Rothman, pays tribute to "The Monument," by Pamela Hansford Johnson, but for a reason which not so long ago literary commentators were prone to discount. The "strong, heartening quality" of Miss Johnson's story springs from her commendably romantic point of view; to her, individuals are more important than masses.

> We do not hear enough today of the dignity of man, apart from his importance as member of this group or representative of that ideology. Miss Johnson's characters have intrinsic dignity. They are whole people, they have mental and spiritual resources.

Though they are affected by the uncertainties, the conflicts and the preferences of their times, "they are touched, not swallowed. Their lives may be colored, altered, by events, but their minds within them are strong and sovereign." Good old Henley and his unconquerable soul!

Those of us who sample the books of the hour as well as renew our spirit through communion with great books of all time must, I think, discern in these three professions of literary faith something sane and strong, a restatement of principles and a rediscovery of values in the best sense traditional. The literature of the immediate future—indeed of a considerable section of the actual present—must have three dominant traits: a respect for its *genre,* a sense of structure and a pervasive vitality.

The novelist—and this applies in measure to the dramatist, the poet and the writer of essays—is no longer primarily and intemperately occupied with his thesis. Men like Upton Sinclair and H. G. Wells are today regarded as good novelists gone wrong. Mr. Sinclair has always had a messiah complex and under its baneful force his considerable ability as a story-teller has been cramped and frustrated. A sufficient commentary on "The Jungle," for instance, is that the book has too much (possibly righteous) indignation about pork packing and too little essential humanity. As for Mr. Wells, he began capably as a spinner of yarns in "The Time Machine," "The War of the Worlds" and "The Research Magnificent," but ended disastrously in "The Undying Fire," "The Soul of a Bishop" and "God the Invisible King," as a preacher of the gospel according to H. G. Wells. The more he writes the less novelist he; and it is irrelevant to add that his is only a discordant voice crying in the wilderness.

Psychology, sociology, economic theory, meticulous realism and apostolic zeal for souls—all may find legitimate place in a work of literature; but, especially in fiction, they need to be subordinated to the far from facile or ignoble art of telling a story. Literature is neither a clinic nor an open forum nor an outdoor pulpit. "The work of art," says Maxwell Anderson, "is a hieroglyph, and the artist's endeavor is to set forth his vision of the world in a series of picture writings which convey meanings beyond the scope of direct statement." That was the theory of Horace, the practise of Cervantes and Shakespeare. Dickens had his theses, plenty of them; but they never got in the way of the richly human characters he created, of the lavishly variegated stories he had to tell.

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Mr. Canby's insistence on "the classical art of novel writing" accords with the practise of several present-day novelists who are setting the pace for tomorrow. There, for example, is "The Ugly Dachshund" is first and foremost a story. The wherein human characteristics are studied in beasts is old almost as the world; but both Aesop and La Fontaine were mainly preachers of morality. G. B. Stern is an artist; and "The Ugly Dachshund" is first and foremost a story. The plight of the Great Dane who thinks he is a Dachshund and who comes into sudden and glorious realization of his difference from other dogs has its obvious analogy in human life and therefore a prevailing "moral"; but that application is never stated, only conveyed, and conveyed through the alchemy of art. Similarly, Miss Kate O'Brien's "Pray for the Wanderer" and Mr. Vincent Sheean's "A Day of Battle" are illustrative of the same trend. Miss O'Brien's deracinated hero motivates a story, does not furnish edification on the mourner's bench. Mr. Sheean's novel is replete with scholarly detail, but the history does not cloud or clog the narrative, and the love fantasy of young De Mézières and the superb portraiture of Voltaire offer an effective contrast of stars and mud. Such books tell things that otherwise cannot be told.

And plot? In the last twenty years many writers have eschewed "the false trappings of the theatre"—for the most part to their own destruction. Amorphous things like Hemingway's "Death in the Afternoon" and Pierre de Coulevain's "Sur la Branche"—the former rapidly dying and the latter long since buried—might have been saved by a bit of despised Sardou technique. Consider, on the contrary, those "competent" stories of Somerset Maugham and Charles Caldwell Dobey; most of them—I except, of course, "Of Human Bondage"—are trivial and limited and thin, but they are readable, even rereadable, because of their well-knit structure. Aristotle's beginning, middle and end can be ignored by novelists only at their peril. Not even the alluring art of Tallulah Bankhead can save so gangling a play as "I Am Different" from premature putrefaction. Admittedly there can be, and there has been, two much stress upon plan, plot, pattern. Bony structure is not everything. But it is one of the things which differentiate a man from a jellyfish.

The recognition of categories and due reverence for technique have their importance in both litrature and life; but most important of all is the attention given to big, distinctive, self-contained and self-directed men and women. Mr. Rothman may never have read John Mitchel's "Jail Journal," but he would find sustenance and confirmation in this entry:

> A book ought to be like a man or a woman, with some individual character in it, though eccentric, yet its own: with some blood in its veins and speculation in its eyes and a way and a will of its own. If it be a rickle of bones; still more if it be a made-up skeleton, collected out of divers graves by a popular editor—with Mr. Bruce's spinal column wired to Mr. Salt's skullbones and Mr. Blezoni's pelvis and ribs, the thing is disgusting.

As an obscure dweller in the Grove of Academe I am impishly aware that the accepted formula for doctoral dissertations is precisely a "made-up skeleton, collected out of divers graves"; but those enterprises conducted in the name of scholarship have little to do with literature. What concerns us here is the fact that great books of the past and promising books of the present do stress human dignity, depict human beings with mental and spiritual resources and convey the impression that the writers of them had stature, vitality and comparative freedom from subserviency to the age and body of the time. Like Byron, the superior writers are not always either saints or heroes, but about them lingers something akin to the heroic in the sense of the adjective as applied to statues. Even the rogues have "intrinsic dignity." They seem larger than life, those human beings, whether creators or creations, associated with authentic literature. Living in their times, the spirit of the times necessarily affected them, but it does not dominate them. They "are touched, not swallowed."

Touched, in two meanings of the word, was Don Quixote, but truly he had a way and a will of his own. Some would say precisely the same thing of Hamlet. Falstaff in "King Henry IV" is larger than life, just as Parolles in "All's Well that Ends Well" is smaller than life. Milton's Satan and Goethe's Mephistopheles are both devilishly vital. And consider Zagloba in the Polish romances of Sienkiewicz, and the immortal Micawber; and Melville's "Moby Dick." Dante everywhere, in life and writings, points the same way; he shows us a Farinata triumphant even in Hell, a Cacciaguida human even in Paradise. Books are friends, and like our other friends they are precious and necessary when they are strong, resourceful, distinctive.

That recent writers have forgotten and ignored all this is manifest. Perhaps it is because so many of them are little men. To them and to their characters the fell clutch of circumstance is indeed fell. As in Mr. Charles G. Norris's "Bricks without Straw," the characters in numerous modern novels are aimless, hopeless, helpless. At times they try to fight back against their environment, but they have nothing to fight with—or for. Without convictions, without a saving life philosophy, without fruitful participation in a cumulative tradition of life and art, lacking both insight and magnanimity—bigness of soul—writers and books illustrate frivolity and futility.

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But goodbye to all that. Readers and writers are coming to realize what through the centuries wise men have known, that, as Emerson said, literature is one of man's efforts to compensate himself for the wrongs of his condition. Art, all art, was given us for that. Looking into our own souls, we tremble; considering history, we are stricken sad; gazing upon the passing show, we are tempted to despair. Why do we turn to books? Not, surely, to gaze upon the shadow shapes of the misery and depravity and littleness that we are and see, but to have flung wide a magic casement opening confidently upon an ideal world unseen. At least, we are unutterably weary of squinting at this goodly earth with the bulging end of the field glasses glued to our eyes.

Books on Country Living—1938

By CHAUNCEY STILLMAN

THE FIRST thing to realize about books on country living is that they are written by authors, not farmers. The real farmer is not articulate. Whoever publishes his experiences on the land thereby puts himself in the special category of farm folk whose cash crop is words. This observation is not meant to imply that all such wares are spurious: the life of the countryman has inspired authoritative and exalted description from Virgil to Borsodi. But it helps account for the affectations that befoul so much of this genre. The commonest of these is false naïveté, or conscious cuteness. The ladies, painful though it be to say so, are the worst offenders. It is one of that sex who cannot see her "feathery emerald carrots and jade peas without a tug of rapture at the heart." It is another who takes pages to describe the antics of her calf named "Sweety Pie." The reader gets to dread the next litter of pigs or hatching of eggs because he knows that the fair authoress will be seized with a rush of motherhood to the head.

Conversely it is not likely that Farmer Jones, his day's work done, puts his feet on the stove and opens to ". . . The dogs are safe in a warm place, Wucky twittering in her little house, and the mother cats asleep with their kittens—there are other things I should like to 'tuck in' for the night. They are the little grasses. For towards morning now the air is frosty cold." The people who indulge in such treats, and to judge from the publishers' lists it is a national pastime, partake of them in arm chairs near carbon monoxide fumes and within sound of the "L."

Untainted by coyness or ecstacy is "Country Living—plus or Minus." It describes numerous pleasures and pitfalls, quoting case histories supported by figures that are often grim. Mr. Wilson takes pains to sober the prospective countryman with thoughts of mortgages, title abstracts and taxes. Against these he places the rural compensations of health, serenity and neighborliness; and if with these imponderables the scales tip toward the country side, at least the weighing has been careful and honest. Mr. Wilson draws his material from rural conditions throughout the country. He quotes a Dakota sheep rancher, a Mormon history of the agrarian development of Utah, and Mr. William Allen White on the wheat farms of Kansas. Thus without pretending to be exhaustive the book has unusual breadth. Governors Aiken and LaFollette contribute regional essays to the symposium. Governor LaFollette prefaces his remarks with a definition of Wisconsin as "a highly conservative state"; whereas Governor Aiken goes out of his way to insist "that for the past couple of centuries Vermont has been a beehive of Liberals." The assumption is that each of the pieces was written independently. Each of these authors proceeds to belie his paradox; Mr. Aiken by maintaining that a pattern of secure subsistence farming is the basis of Vermont life, Mr. LaFollette by stressing "great farm industry" (which usually means ruinous monoculture).

It probably was irony which led Mr. Wilson to include a lady's long description of her family's rural experiment in which "We bought no livestock. . . . One cow might be useful but we would be tied closely to the farm by an animal which would need daily attention. We were not accustomed to being held to one place day in and day out." Then she complains that her Vermont neighbors although polite continued to treat them as "only 'summer people' just staying a little longer than usual." It is easier to fool oneself about farming than it is to fool a Vermonter. Books on country life abound with the assumption that merely to live beyond commuting distance in a charming old salt-box house among flowers confers the dignity of a life from the soil.

"R.F.D.," Book of the Month Club choice for March, is a completely personal grab-bag of diary, essay, catalogue, nature description and practical pamphlet. Mr. Smart puts across his passionate love for the farm of his boyhood to which he returns as a grown man. His struggles

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to work it are convincingly and hilariously told. But his love is demanding. He brings a testy haste and an urban tension to the eternal rhythms of the land. The result is that he is usually angry. Vast impersonal Nature replies, "So hot, little man?"

The trouble with this prodigal is that he has not found a philosophy to justify his joys. Scraps of city notions nag him. Landowner though he be, the despair of the uprooted individual haunts him. His thirst for social justice is still mixed up with a city-born belief in class war. His sense of inferiority to his neighbors—he agonizes because he cannot pitch hay all day—springs from a deeper sense of impotence. His assertiveness has the pathos of the man who cannot feel that he really belongs. It can be absorbing, this business of watching a man fight his psychological battle. It can also be painfully embarrassing. The missing ingredients are humility and perspective. With such qualities "R.F.D." could have been made a large symbolic figure of the city boy who wants to become a country man. The change from urban intellectual is far from complete, but the record to date is so intelligent and human that one hopes for a mature work of Mr. Smart which will describe the rural philosopher.

The title "Fifth Avenue to Farm" might lead one to expect an account of personal experience. Actually it is an essay on American life from a biological angle. The authors maintain that the sole condition of our survival as a civilization is a predominantly rural society. Their position is historically secure, and their warning reinforced by ample statistics, such as those of the Department of Agriculture which show that the national birth rate declined 35 percent between 1921 and 1936, and that the rate of decline is greatest by far in urban sections.

> "Our cities require the constant replenishment of human stocks from the countrysides, just as they must be furnished with surplus food and raw materials from the country. . . .
>
> "Because cities are unproductive of children, a hundred and fifty years from now the offices and homes of our cities will not be occupied by the great-great-grandchildren of the persons who now occupy these homes and offices. The present occupants with few exceptions will have no great-great-grandchildren. Their places will be taken and their cultural practises will be pursued, if the practises are pursued at all, by the great-great-grandchildren of persons who at the present time are American farmers."

When, however, Messrs. Fritts and Gwinn make an elaborate parallel between livestock and human breeding, they are on less secure ground. "If the tops [of a race] take to the land where rearing children is congenial, the society improves. If the tops flock to and remain in the cities, where nature is hostile to children, the society declines." From the standpoint of human genetics this is unsupported conjecture. There are spiritual variables which rule out any close analogy between the breeding of animals and humans. Messrs. Fritts and Gwinn are optimistic about America's chances to rebuild her culture on the weed-grown foundations of the country. They regard our centralization as an aberration, a loss of balance caused by the shock of industrialism on an expanding country. The authors of "Fifth Avenue to Farm" are more convincing on the inevitable decadence of a race predominatingly urban than on their thesis that our people has the vitality to recover.

Mr. Tetlow's experiences bear a title, "We Farm for a Hobby and Make It Pay," which admits that their sphere of application is restricted. For this he was sharply and unfairly upbraided by some reviewers. The charge was that a man is not qualified to write on farming who also holds down a good job in the city. Nevertheless this factual and honest account of semi-subsistence living has a direct value for the growing number of commuting homesteaders who supplement their incomes with vegetable gardens, livestock and home ownership. For that matter this kind of life is as well-grounded in American culture as it is economically and psychologically rewarding. Until the turn of the century it was the accepted rule to work one's own land no matter what one's profession or trade. This applied as much to the intellectuals and statesmen. Emerson, for instance, farmed all his life, and it occurred to no one that he was being eccentric or deliberately picturesque. Security, whether economic or emotional, is a value closely related to society's degree of decentralization. The popularity of this lively and sensible book augurs well for the growing trend in this direction.

A remote upstate hill "known by the thunderous name of Phudd" has found a happy celebrant in Alan Devoe. Selborne, the Sabine farm and Walden Pond are a select company, but their *genii loci* may well deign to welcome Phudd. In "Phudd Hill" Mr. Devoe closely observes man and his world, "where essential silence chills and blesses." Winds and rivers, life and death, a pheasant's brood on parade, the auguries of Grandma Krause—he treats these fragments in such a way that from them we sense the whole.

Nature has taught him reverence, so he can impart its blessing. This volume of essays is too austere and unemphatic to stop the crowd. But it will be read, we venture, when all the other volumes on rural matters are moldering unopened, for it has what William James calls "that invisible, molecular moral force that works from individual to individual . . . like the capillary oozing of water, which, if you give it time, will rend the hardest monuments of man's pride."

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The Most Famous Shakespeare

By JOHN BAKELESS

APPEARANCE of the twenty-second volume of the Furness Variorum Shakespeare a few months ago represents a great deal more than just another volume of another edition of Shakespeare. It is a guarantee to the world of scholarship that the Fourth Variorum—from a scholar's standpoint the most valuable of all the hundreds of editions of Shakespeare that have been printed in the 315 years since the First Folio appeared — will eventually be completed. For a whole series of plays as yet unedited is promised in the next two years and plans are making for the last few volumes soon thereafter.

This is the continuation by a cooperating group of American scholars of a task begun some seventy years ago by an American scholar, carried on by his son, and continued without intermission.

Other editions of Shakespeare are easier to read. Almost any edition is easier to hold and has simpler and more compact notes. The Variorum was never meant to be either simple or compact; and—though many a sixteen-year-old boy has read and enjoyed it—it is not quite meant for the average reader.

Into the twenty-two volumes of the Fourth, or Furness, Variorum are packed all the results of more than three hundred years of writing about Shakespeare—the carefully winnowed gleanings from at least ten thousand books. No one, of course, knows exactly how much has been written about Shakespeare, but careful bibliographical study reveals approximately that number.

Some of that mass of scribbling represents real scholarship and real criticism. Much of it is pure futility. A good deal of it is pretty Ph.D.-ish. An alarming proportion is the work of cranks who, like Delia Bacon, insist Shakespeare is somebody else, for cranks have always been attracted to Shakespeare as flies to honey.

Though it is not hard to read through the thirty-odd plays, the sonnets, and the five poems which have been attributed to Shakespeare and which are for the most part undoubtedly his work, the writings about Shakespeare are another matter; and of course the greater part of them are not worth reading. But to produce a work like this, someone has to read them. The obscurest brochure, the oddest idea of the most Germanic German pedant, the queerest crotchet of the oddest crank that ever haunted the British Museum—all is fish that comes to the net of the Elizabethan scholar. For even the fishiest of them may contain a stray fact, a sound idea, a textual hint, a genuinely illuminating emendation.

That is the real value of the Furness Variorum, which almost from the beginning has been used by scholars the world over as a kind of court of Shakespearian last appeal. All that matters is here. The twenty-two volumes give the complete text of twenty plays and five poems, with all the variant readings of the various folios and quartos and the emendations of the greatest editors from the days of Pope and Dr. Johnson to the days of Professor Kittredge and the Folger Shakespeare Library. "Hamlet" takes two volumes. "Macbeth" has been revised. The twenty-second and latest volume contains the five poems, "Venus and Adonis," "Lucrece," "The Passionate Pilgrim," "The Phoenix and the Turtle" and "A Lover's Complaint," edited by Professor Hyder Edward Rollins, long known for his admirably edited series of the Elizabethan anthologies which peculiarly fit him to make this new collection of the poems of the greatest Elizabethan.

A twenty-third volume might also be included here. Professor Raymond Mills Alden long ago brought out an independent edition of the "Sonnets," which is not technically a part of the Furness Variorum series but might as well be, since it is edited on a similar scale and plan and fits comfortably on the shelf with the Furness volumes. And one might also include the Concordance to Shakespeare's "Poems," which was edited by the elder Mrs. Furness and was published uniformly with her husband's works.

It all started about ninety years ago when the actress Fanny Kemble presented a fourteen-year-old Philadelphia boy with a season ticket to her series of Shakespearian readings. The boy was Horace Howard Furness. As the youngster began to read Shakespeare, he soon found it difficult to compare what different critics had said about him and about the text of his plays. Eventually, as a young man, he made an edition of his own—a bulky scrap book, which was really a small private variorum edition of "Hamlet," the most complete that up to that time had ever been made.

As a matter of fact, the "New" Variorum was not a new idea. There has been three earlier variorum editions—that is, editions combining the comments "variorum editorum" — one in 1803, another in 1813, and a third in 1821. The first two had drawn heavily upon the Shakespearian criticism of Dr. Samuel Johnson. The third was edited by the younger Boswell, son of Dr. Johnson's friend. The new American variorum was to draw heavily upon all of these and upon thousands of books besides. It was to use up the whole lives of the two Furnesses, father and son, and

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when they were dead with the work incomplete, it was still to go on.

The elder Horace Howard Furness was fortunate beyond most scholars in being able to put his whole energy into his task. He did not have to teach. He did not have to write for a living. He did not in the least care about being "creative" or "productive." He was devoted to kittens and reared them in huge quantities. He liked tarpon fishing in the Gulf of Mexico. His family life was ideally happy. Otherwise he had but one interest: Shakespeare.

Born in 1833, he was graduated from Harvard in 1854, studied for the bar and intended to practise law. But the early development of deafness made that impossible and also kept him out of the Civil War except as a member of the Sanitary Commission—thereby quite probably preserving his life for Shakespearian studies.

He collected a private Shakespearian library of 7,000 or 8,000 volumes, and to his books added portraits, busts, death-masks, relics of every kind pertaining to Shakespeare and the actors who had played his characters—anything that might have value either as illustration or association. He owned the famous pair of gloves said to have belonged to Shakespeare himself.

For forty-one years, Dr. Furness averaged ten hours a day at his desk, and nearly twenty of those years he spent at his country place, Lindenshade, Wallingford, near Philadelphia, with nothing to distract him and with the Variorum Edition—and kittens—as the only business of his life.

The results of this stupendous energy and this superb opportunity began to appear in 1871. "Romeo and Juliet" was the first play published. When he died in 1912, he had published editions of twelve plays while another was ready for posthumous publication.

As his son, Horace Howard Furness, jr., grew up, he became associated with his father's work, especially after 1901, when he gave up the teaching—of physics, not of literature—which had occupied him for the preceding ten years. For a little more than ten years the two edited jointly and the son had completed "Richard III" and most of "Julius Caesar" at the time of his father's death.

When his father died, the younger Furness declined the suggestion that a committee of scholars should take over and complete the work, now more than a third done, and spent the remainder of his life upon it, editing in all four plays. There is a feeling among some scholars that, in quality as well as in quantity, the son's work falls below the level of his father's, but no one denies its essential excellence. The two were much alike—their physical resemblance was at times uncanny—and the intimate touch of father and son in that last decade made him the logical man to carry on.

The Shakespeare library which the younger Furness had inherited from his father had by the time of his own death grown to 10,000 volumes, of which 8,000 dealt with Shakespeare himself and some 1,500 with contemporary dramatists. These books, with an endowment of $100,000 for their care, were bequeathed to the University of Pennsylvania, which placed them in a special memorial library.

It was a peculiarly fitting memorial, for all the Furnesses had been devoted to intellectual or literary pursuits of one kind or another, of which the Shakespearian editing was merely the most important. Mrs. Caspar Wister, a sister of the elder editor, published a series of translations of German novels extending over forty years and helped her brother with his proofs. Another son collected monographs on Borneo and wrote a treatise on the Dyaks. A daughter wrote the standard book on the children's game of "cat's cradle." The entire family once united in a novel, "Grace Auchester," which was printed in a limited edition of seven copies, one for each author. It remains a notable bibliographical rarity.

The close ties of intellect and kinship which united this remarkable group are shown in the dedications. After the death of Mrs. Furness, volume after volume of the Shakespeare bears merely the line, "In Memoriam," without a name. After the elder Furness himself died, his son's next volume is dedicated to his memory with a line from "Henry VI": "Methinks, 'tis prize enough to be his son."

When the younger Furness died, the two scholars, father and son, had together edited a little more than half of Shakespeare, including in their series most of the important plays, but leaving all of the minor and a few of the major plays untouched. The series might have ended there; but almost at once the Modern Language Association stepped into the breach and, aided by a grant from the American Philosophical Society, undertook to complete the series.

The completion of the Fourth Variorum is now in charge of a group of eminent Elizabethan scholars — Americans all — including Professor C. F. Tucker Brooke, of Yale; Dr. J. Q. Adams, of the Folger Shakespeare Library; Professor Felix E. Schelling and Professor Matthias A. Shaaber, of the University of Pennsylvania; and Professor Kittredge. The Rollins edition of the "Poems" has just appeared. "Henry IV, Part I," edited by Professor Samuel B. Hemingway, of Yale, appeared last year. Five more plays are to appear before the end of 1940. Beyond that, no proposals for further publication are definite as yet; but the Modern Language Association plans to continue with the series until all of Shakespeare's plays have been included—a task which will probably last at least until 1950.

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A Gentle Aryan

By EUPHEMIA VAN RENSSELAER WYATT

I MADE a friend last summer. While the heat served defensively against intrusion, we became very intimate, myself and an Oxford don from Saxony—a scholar, shy but debonnair, who lived in the urbane period between revolutions in the early nineteenth century.

Professor Max Mueller had two foundations for his life: his Christian faith and the Aryans. Neither ever failed him, and he enjoyed a singularly happy and successful span of years. He could get more pleasure out of a page of Sanskrit than another man might from a whole racing stable and, at seventy, he blithely translated "The Critique of Pure Reason." It is said that Kant has gained lucidity in the process. Max Mueller was born in one of the walled-in, story-book German cities where at night the watchman made his rounds with a lantern; where the Duke dispensed culture to his citizens and drove in his ponderous coach through the neat countryside. The Duke of Anhalt-Dessau had for his librarian Wilhelm Mueller, a poet as handsome as he was gay, whose verse is enshrined in Shubert's "Winterreise." When Mueller died at thirty, his pretty widow took her children daily to "God's acre," where she wept for an hour by his grave. Death thus became as familiar to little Max as life, but even more real to him were the stories he had heard on his father's knee, for it was the period when the old folk tales were being collected by the Muellers' friends, the brothers Grimm.

Although Dessau had its own ducal theatre and concerts, luxury was unkown. Books were rare treasures, and the family who possessed a set of Goethe lent it to all their neighbors. Even steel pens and paper were so scarce that Max was really grateful when he received four copybooks for Christmas. But Lutherans, Catholics and Jews all lived happily together, attending the same school, where it was hard to distinguish one from another. The three Muellers subsisted on the ducal pension of 100 thalers—the preposterous sum of $75 per annum. Of course the ill-clad children shivered all winter and were invariably hungry and no one could understand why Max had headaches. But he enjoyed his boyhood and when, in later years, he sat down to banquets in the East India House where every guest cost $20, the rich food tasted all the better when he remembered the half-starved lad in Dessau.

At twelve came school in Leipzig with Latin, Greek and Hebrew, which he found much easier than French. At the university he experimented with Arabic and Persian and enrolled himself with two others as the first students of Sanskrit. By the time he was twenty, he had gained his doctorate and had moved on to Berlin, where he became an enthusiast of the new science of comparative philology which seemed even more exciting than digging for buried cities. He also acquired Pali, Bengali and Hindustani and listened to Schelling lecture on Hindu philosophy. Then a baronial cousin offered him lodgings in Paris, where he studied Zend with Burnouf who had edited the "Zend Avesta." But so far removed from modern Persian is Zend that not a Parsee then could understand a word of his daily prayers, handed down by rote. Sanskrit, however, remained Mueller's choice, and Burnouf suggested that the real contribution to be made to Oriental learning was a scholarly edition of the "Rig Veda."

Now that swift action is the order of life it is difficult to appreciate the importance which ideas possessed in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Clive and Hastings made many a millionaire nabob, but the fortunes to be amassed in India awakened far less excitement in Europe than the rich vein of Hindu thought. It was in 1784 that Sir William Jones, already a colossal student of Oriental languages, had been appointed as a judge in Calcutta, where he founded the Asiatic Society and became the pioneer in Sanskrit. Sir William, during the course of his industrious life, mastered forty-one languages, in twenty-eight of which he was fluent. He made a digest of Mohammedan and Hindu law and it was his translation of Kalidasa's poetic dramas that so impressed Goethe. Schlegel, Schopenhauer and Herder became Hinduphiles. In the next century this was to reach America with Thoreau and Emerson and Whitman. Meanwhile the secrets that were to be disinterred from Sanskrit literature fired the imagination of the educated world. The "Laws of Manu," the "Upanishads," the philosophies and the "Mahabarata" were soon available, but behind them all, impenetrable, mysterious, hoary, was the fabled "Rig Veda," supposedly the most ancient complete book in existence; the repository of Aryan myth and precept; the final authority for all Brahminical teaching.

What secrets might not be contained in its 1,028 hymns compiled fourteen hundred years before the birth of Christ? What light might it not throw on Greek mythology? What similarities with the Old Testament might it not disclose? So wrought up did the public become over the latter suggestion that a youthful lieutenant besieged the pundits of Calcutta with queries, mak-

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ing it clear that ample rewards might be forthcoming if only some trace of Adam and Eve, of Noah or Prometheus could be found in the Vedic verses. The Brahmins were jealous of their sacred book, but after continued solicitation, the pundits relented and soon, to excited lecture halls, Lieutenant Wilford read extracts from the "Veda" confirming the flood with due mention of Shem, Ham and Japeth. Sir William Jones examined the verses and verified the translations. England and the Continent thrilled to the news. Then the coincidences in Wilford's quotations began to multiply at such a rate that the Asiatic Society grew apprehensive and it was discovered that the obliging pundits had simply interpolated whole pages of biblical data, artistically camouflaged.

But once the fraud was published, the Brahmins guarded more closely the "Rig Veda" and, when a nosing scholar recognized the tempting MS. in a Rajah's library, such black looks were cast on him that he dared not turn the pages. By 1803, however, Colebrooke had managed to read some hymns and write essays on them and then Vedic MSS. began to filter into the library of the East India Company in London, to the Bodleian in Oxford and the Bibliothèque Royale in Paris. A young German orientalist of the British Museum decided to edit the "Rig Veda," but died after one volume. Max Mueller determined to continue the task. It was an imposing one. The "Rig Veda" is written in Sanskrit so primitive that it necessitates special training. Only one in a hundred Brahmins in India could decipher it. Not only must all the texts be copied and collated but also Sayana's commentary, which was written three thousand years later. To verify Sayana's numerous quotations entailed the copying and indexing of all these other MSS. The whole work, Mueller estimated, would fill six quartos of a thousand pages each. Who would pay for this immense undertaking? Mueller had no idea, but he at once set to work, supporting himself by copying MSS. for other scholars. Thanks to a letter from Von Humboldt, he was permitted to carry the MSS. to his room. After three or four hours work, however, he found it was impossible not to make some mistakes, so he used tracing paper. His system was to sit up all one night, to lie down for three hours in his clothes the second night and go to bed on the third. He could only afford one real meal a day but he was happy.

He lived in an Aryan dream.

As clearly as in the old German fairy tales, he saw the simple pastoral people on the plains creating in their daily lives, their hopes, their fears the folk-lore that was to be the heritage of half mankind. The words they coined, obsolete sometimes in later Sanskrit, were doubtless from the roots of that primeval tongue which Mueller believed was the genetrix of Sanskrit, Zend, Greek, Latin, Gothic, Celtic, etc., just as Latin was to be of the romance languages. He was never lonely in his garret; he was unswathing history from her swaddling clothes and watching her infant steps. As he laboriously traced the delicate old characters hour by hour and the roots became more familiar, they evoked fascinating images. Perhaps comparative philology sounds dry and dusty —to Mueller it was a continuation of the Grimms' and his father's fireside stories. Did not the root *ma,* "to make," with *matar* for "mother," and the root *pa,* "to protect," with *pitar* for "father," reflect like a mirror the earliest picture of family life? What tender sentiment lies in the fact that *brahtar,* the supporter, means "brother" and *svastor,* the comforter, is "sister"! The Sanskrit for "daughter" is a complete idyl in itself. The father in the "Rig Veda" did not call his daughter *suta* (his begotten) nor *filia* (suckling) but rather *duhitar,* his little milkmaid! For Mueller, the Aryan fairyland became the Eden of simple pleasures and family affection. He was delighted that he could find no common roots for the different people's words for war and weapons.

He wandered in another etymological paradise when it came to mythology. From study of the Vedic poetry he came to believe that the Sun in his hot might, racing after the fragile beauty of the Dawn, was inspiration for most primeval romance. Just as the glittering bright mass of the sky, Dyaus, became a god of personal dimension in Zeus, so in some ancient dialect of Elis, the rising moon was known as Selene and the sunset, or sun diving into the sea, was Endymion. But when men had come to forgot that "Selene kisses Endymion into sleep" meant "It is night," they began to tell a story to fit the names. The explanation of Daphne as the Dawn (Ahana) whom the Sungod kisses to death includes the difficulty of explaining why Daphne became a laurel bush, but it fitted the Vedic verse, "The Dawn comes near to him—she expires as he begins to breathe; the Mighty One irradiates the sky."

It was when Mueller came to London to consult the wonderful collection of Sanskrit MSS. in the East India Company library that he met the Chevalier von Bunsen, the Prussian Minister. Von Bunsen had started out as an orientalist, but married one of his pupils, Miss Waddington of England, and drifted into diplomacy. His interest in Sanskrit, however, was still keen and his hand trembled when he touched at last a MS. of the "Rig Veda." It was Bunsen who persuaded the East India Company to sponsor Mueller; he also introduced him to the Queen and English society. Mueller settled in Oxford and lived there the rest of his life. On the princely salary of $750 a year he set to work and brought out the first volume of the "Rig Veda" four years later. Twenty years passed before all six volumes were completed, but

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by that time he was a fellow of Christ Church and All Souls and a professor of modern languages. During the Crimean War he published a grammar and phrase book for the commissary of all the languages in the war zone. He also found time to edit the Sacred Books of the East in fifty-one volumes. In 1868, a chair of comparative philology was established for him in Oxford. He was also the only layman ever invited to speak in Westminster Abbey. He married the sister-in-law of Kingsley and Froude and became a great favorite at court. Society enjoyed his amiability and musical gifts; in fact he was one of the most popular and widely known of scholars. Japan honored him and the University of Tokyo bought his library when he died. India duly acclaimed his efforts, as well she might. Singlehanded, he had given her her first authoritative edition of her sacred book.

There is no question but that the religion of the "Rig Veda" is on a high plane of purity. Though Mueller admitted that, from a Christian point of view, there was little he could approve, the Hindus who followed the Vedic hymns were closer to Christianity than with the Laws of Manu. The atrocities of Siva, the licentiousness of Krishna have no place in the "Rig Veda," nor are there any texts to countenance child marriage or to prohibit the remarriage of child widows. Although the four classes of priests, warriors, husbandmen and peasants are mentioned and marriage between the *Aryas,* or nobles, and the peasants is not encouraged, there are no laws that degrade the "untouchables" into a state below the animals. When the English forbade the continuation of suttee (the burning of widows on their husband's pyres), the Brahmins had quoted the "Rig Veda" as authority for the practise. But in the new edition it was discovered that the word *agneh* (fire) had been substituted for *agre* (altar) which completely changed the text.

Max Mueller could never agree with his friend, Ruskin's, dictum that what we think or know or believe is of little consequence: the only thing of consequence is what we do. "Look at Hercules," said Mueller, "if ever there was a doer, it was Hercules and yet now they tell us he's a myth!" Are the sands much ruffled that cover the walls of Babylon? No, only ideas march on.

But, alas, Mueller's pet idea has marched with iron feet. His Aryans meeting together in a pastoral past becomes a slogan for the same intolerance and cruelty that polluted his "Rig Veda." "In the beginning," says the Veda, "there arose the Golden Child. He was the one-born lord of all that is. He established the earth and the sky. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?"

The answer, it should be remembered, has come in Hebrew from the Semites.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

FOR ONE who has been a member of the editorial board of the Catholic Book Club, as the writer has been, since its beginning, to join in the well-earned chorus of praise and thanks now greeting the club on the occasion of its tenth anniversary, might seem crassly egotistical were it not for the fact that precisely because of my connection with the editorial committee I am in a position to call attention to those who really deserve the main credit for the great achievement accomplished by the club — the three men who are it only true begetters, Messrs. Thomas Kernan, Stearns Cunningham and Father Francis Talbot, S.J. Their collaboration was an ideal example of true and fruitful cooperation between the lay and the clerical forces of American Catholicism. The creation of the club, its spirit, its practical operating technique, its steady progress against many serious difficulties, and its notable success, have resulted from the work of this inner group of the club's personnel.

We editors cooperated to the best of our joint abilities, and certainly have been throughout sincerely interested in the club's unique mission, but it is well to recognize the truth that the splendid work of the Catholic Book Club depended upon the practical idealism, the creative will-power, the self-devotion and self-sacrifice of its real leaders, the two young laymen and the young priest who made a dream come true by working rather than dreaming. The point is highly important, it seems to me, quite apart from the particular character of the work itself. How many fine visions of Catholic Action, within and without the strict definition of that term, have gleamed and flashed and died away again in mere futility, in wasted enthusiasm, because the dreamers lacked the stamina to labor for the realization of their ideas in the dusty, arid arena of hard, practical work.

What was attempted by these pioneers was a task of truly heroic nature. They dared to challenge the mighty spirit of mediocrity that has been steadily extending its debasing influence over the public mind, particularly in literature, through the mass-production of periodicals and books, appealing in the main to the vast numbers of new readers produced by modern mass methods of compulsory "education," so-called. They boldly erected a standard of high quality. They knew that a similar revolt was proceeding in the field of general secular literature, where original artists and bold thinkers, and novel developments in technical methods of writing, were appearing in bewildering abundance. But they also knew that while much that was unquestionably good was being accomplished by the modern secular movements, even more harm was being done by evil elements of moral and spiritual revolt and anarchy, and the utter defiance of all the values that had been created by Christian culture.

Catholic readers, in especial young Catholic readers, urgently required sympathetic, constant, informed guid-

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ance in the midst of the confusion of this age of transition and of crisis. The work of Catholic writers, and of writers who although not members of the Church were yet in their work congenial to the higher standards of literature supported by the principles of Christian civilization, was appearing more and more abundantly, but in a scattered, haphazard fashion, so that the great body of Catholic readers, turning away from the mass of mediocrity, on the one hand, and repelled by the excessive moral anarchy and license of far too many of the new, original writers leading the secular movement, needed a trustworthy center of information, of guidance, by means of which the best examples of the world-wide Catholic literary renaissance could be known by them.

Of course, I do not claim for the creators and constant leaders of the club, and their cooperating editorial board, that their aim has been completely realized, and their choices have invariably been representative of their own ideals. Certainly not. But it is only necessary for those who have not been close to their efforts to glance over the long list of works chosen by the club to realize what a wealth of literature has been canalized and concentrated for American readers during the ten years of its existence. It has already brought together what is the nucleus, at least, of a library representative of the best accomplished in the splendid resurgence of literate Catholicity that marks our time, and it provides a firm foundation for the expansion of that movement in the future.

Communications

DEMOCRACIES AND WAR

Scotch Plains, N. J.

TO the Editors: Before these lines have been printed Europe may be plunged into a major war. And there is great speculation as to America's ability to avoid becoming involved in that war. The German Ambassador is alleged to have said we could avoid involvement for no longer than three months, and the French Ambassador to have been more generous with his speculation of six months. In any event, it is significant that many people here speak of "probability." And it is significant that the probability is that we shall join the "democracies" rather than the "dictatorships."

Does this mean that we shall again sacrifice hundreds of thousands of our young men, and billions of our wealth to "save democracy," just as we did in 1917 and 1918?

From British and liberal propaganda we might take it that it is the duty of every democracy to fight shoulder to shoulder with every other democracy that freedom (and the balance of power in Europe) may not perish. "England expects every American to do his duty!"

But why must "democracies" all stand and/or fall together? And are we and the other "democratic" nations really "democracies"?

Hilaire Belloc long since pointed out that Britain is not a democracy, but rather, a plutocracy with certain "democratic" political "forms." Our own United States could hardly be called a democracy in the same sense that Switzerland is a democracy. True, most Americans have the vote, and we have a supposedly representative form of government, but it is not at all an unfair question to ask of what is the government representative?

There is little use going back to 1860, or 1917, or any other date of importance to attempt to find just what our government was representative of. "Things have changed!" But I'm sure any thinking observant person will agree that our government has more often been representative of private interests and pressure groups than of our people as a whole.

In Lincoln's day it was possible to describe the democratic ideal as "government of the people, by the people and for the people." Is it today? Mr. Michael Derrick, in the *Weekly Review* for September 15, 1938, writes: ". . . It is probable that most people would be prepared to acknowledge that government *by* the people is a myth, and that a state is democratic if it is governed *for* the people, provided perhaps that the people recognize that the government is for them; that is, if the government is popular." He concludes that by this test, Italy is quite as democratic as England, inasmuch as the Fascist government is undoubtedly popular with the vast majority of Italians and is no less certainly governing "for the people" than is the government of England.

Much of this seems to me to apply to the United States. Our Congress can, without any referendum among its constituents, involve us in war (if, indeed, the machinations of our State Department do not have even more part in the involvement than our Congress, and with even less fiction of "representation"). That is to say, politicians elected on vastly different issues and platforms, can consent to a war for this country. In the past, it is not at all clear that Congress only consented to war when it believed a vast majority of our citizens were eager for war. It is alleged that business and financial interests, various Anglophiles, etc., contributed a great deal more weight than the wishes of our people at large.

Since the World War was fought by the Allies to "save democracy," and victory allowed the "democracies" who fought for democracy to impose their democratic notions on Central Europe, it behooves us to observe whether (and how well or ill) their parliamentary democracy suited the various nations, and served the cause of peace and prosperity generally.

Democracy did not last in Germany. The result—Hitler and the totalitarian Nazi Socialism. It is evident that the parliamentary form of democracy did not suit the needs of the German people, or this would not have happened. Italy found democracy of the parliamentary sort so unwieldy that it became possible for Mussolini and Fascism to seize control and achieve a very large margin of popularity with the Italian people. In Middle Europe there have been cancers of minority problems ever since the Treaty of Versailles, which now reach a culmination in the Sudeten crisis.

"Democracy" isn't a cure-all of political and economic ills, liberal propaganda notwithstanding. That much is obvious. Nor is the word sufficient reason to send us to war that the minorities in Central Europe may be op-

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pressed by parliaments controlled by popular majorities rather than dictators supported by popular majorities, or vice versa.

If we are to be involved in war, the involvement must rest on firmer moral and practical grounds than the myth that democracy must be preserved at all costs lest freedom perish.

THOMAS BARRY.

ARE WE FAIR TO THE CHURCH?

Philadelphia, Pa.

TO the Editors: Having read Bishop Lucey's "Are We Fair to the Church?" in THE COMMONWEAL, September 9 and 16, it seems to me that His Reverence's consideration of the CIO smacks of the tang of special pleading; and I cannot, as a member of the CIO, realize his assurance that the CIO will expel all subversive elements. To my pain and deep regret it has been my humiliation to witness such elements not only as welcomed, but fostered and peculiarly fondled. They are a necessary adjunct for intimidation; to force the issue, as it were, when a question hangs in the balance. Let not the American hierarchy and clergy, or Catholic laity be deceived with statistics, or with smooth language.

The CIO as an American organization should be democratic, even in relation to foreign affairs. This means, according to my interpretation, that as a body, posters fostering the cause of the Bolsheviks of Spain should not be permitted, by it, to cover all the walls of the Union Hall, calling for funds as well as volunteers to fight for tyranny. Nor, when a renegade priest appears in the States to plead this same cause, should he be invited to howl out his attacks against Franco, and no voice granted in defense of that singularly brave and sterling Catholic gentleman. Such experiences I have experienced in our CIO hall in New York; and I would say beware of words, words, words, even such as proceed from CIO Labor circles. Were this all, Americans may not yet be moved to fear. But when we have a prevalence of rabid atheism, and voiced anti-clericism amongst the members it is time to put the thinking cap on and allow something else besides figures and facts to enter into the calculation; a sense of justice and charity. For it has well been said: "By their fruits you shall know them." The fruits of the CIO are of doubtful value, considering the losses entailed to reap the gains.

As for the divination of Lewis: *C'est à rire.* Messiahism has long since been condemned as a heresy, even though it be held as against justice and charity to attack it. From such mundane Messiahs, *Libera nos Domine!* For they are birds of a feather with the grey of Hitlerism, the black of Fascism, and the red of Stalin, and in no way to be named with the Phoenix Christ, or the Dove of the Holy Spirit! Let the CIO reform itself. The Messiah Lewis will not or cannot do it!

Democratic government is not necessary for salvation, but to profess it, and practise tyranny is sheer hypocrisy. I have attended meetings where men were compelled to vote as advised, with a roar as threatening as that of the one who prowls about to devour, as bold, as sinister—despite the contradiction in terms—certainly irrefutable and invulnerable. For woe to him who shall muster courage to wheeze-out a dissenting utterance! The CIO needs communists and rowdies! They are one of its means to exist; and, perhaps—*Cave. Cavete, O populi*—one of its *raisons d'être.*

J. LEO J. WASHILA.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: The unsavory letter of J. M. Collins prompts me to add my word of congratulations to THE COMMONWEAL for Bishop Lucey's two splendid articles.

That one of the authorized teachers of the Church, and one well versed in the complexities of our socio-economic system should have blazed the trail for us and pointed to the principles involved, is a challenge to those of us who are inclined to reject the painting for the speck of dust.

Bishop Lucey's appraisal of communist influence in the CIO is consistent with the judgment of other qualified and unprejudiced outside observers, including Catholic economists of note.

The present controversy over the CIO recalls to mind the near-condemnation of the Knights of Labor nearly fifty years ago, until Cardinal Gibbons championed their cause, and influenced the Church to approve that organization. May we assert not too boldly that Bishop Lucey is now making that history repeat itself?

PATRICK J. WHELAN.

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: Bishop Robert Lucey's article appearing in two recent issues of THE COMMONWEAL presents in vigorous and realistic style Catholic teachings on the labor question. He brings the labor encyclicals to light and applies them in forthright manner to present-day problems. Congratulations.

JOHN BROPHY.

QUEBEC'S PADLOCK LAW

Montreal, Que.

TO the Editors: Your comment on Quebec's Padlock Law, in the August 26 issue of THE COMMONWEAL, was appreciatively read by those Quebec Catholics who share your opinion that the end (elimination of communism) does not justify the means (a dangerous tampering with an acknowledged right, viz., freedom of speech and assembly). However, the majority of our Catholics would probably, like Mr. Scott of Ontario, object to your views on the Padlock Law—and a few other subjects as well. "And proud of it!" The same type of mind criticizes you in the U. S. A.

THE COMMONWEAL is right in its stand that the only answer to the Communist party is a tremendous effort, with all our heart and with all our mind, to solve the economic and social problem. Anyone who has to do with the unemployed in Quebec knows that this effort is not being made despite our Catholicism. Notwith-

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standing our strength here for 300 years (and despite much good accomplished), Bourassa says we have been the most capitalistic of the provinces, known for low wages and a "docile" population. We can only accept the challenge of communism with the rest of Christendom, "as a guilty world which has not done its duty," to quote Berdyaev. It will take much more than a crude law of suppression to set us right in the eyes of God and man.

As a liberal, Mr. Scott should know that the Liberal party under Mr. King made several attempts while in opposition to abolish Section 98 of the Criminal Code, a wartime measure against sedition reincarnated in the Padlock Law, and carried out their resolution when they got into power. He should also know what is generally said here that Mr. Lapointe did not dare disallow the Quebec legislation because Mr. Duplessis, our Premier, was hoping in that case to raise a great election cry against the "communistic Liberals."

M. S.

CRITICISM OF ART

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Replying to Miss Rourke's objections in the September 30 COMMONWEAL, I wish to say that I read every word of her book before reviewing it, that she did not demonstrate to me that Sheeler employed forms in space through color, and that consequently she fell back, without knowing it, on claims of subject-matter. This I termed confusion. Elie Faure's statement that "few writers understand painting" still seems to me true, though surely it is not equivalent to saying, as Miss Rourke maintains that I did, that no writers do, or that words cannot be used to get at painting. After all, there has been a Baudelaire, a Fromentin and a Focillon—to go no farther.

My only regret is that Miss Rourke's letter conveys a tone of personal injury. Such was certainly not my intention. Having reviewed with enthusiasm her biography on Audubon two years ago I came to her latest with everything in her favor. My disappointment remains despite her objections. Likewise my hope that her next will be as fresh and vital as the earlier book.

JEROME MELLQUIST.

THE BREVIARY IN ENGLISH

Baltimore, Md.

TO the Editors: It is delightful to learn through letters in THE COMMONWEAL that many lay persons are interested in the Roman Breviary. It seems that some read it in English because they have no Latin. They would do well to look into Lowe's "Church Latin for Beginners" (London, Burns, Oates and Washbourne, Ltd., 1923), an excellent little book which in the hands of a competent teacher (for instance, any priest of one of the Latin rites) would soon render a person able to understand much, if not all, that he hears or reads in liturgical Latin.

REV. EDWIN RYAN.

The Stage & Screen

Dame Nature

"DAME NATURE" presents the reviewer with a difficult problem. It is a French play, set in Paris, and the subject is of a special rather than a universal interest. It is so special that it is utterly inconceivable in an American setting. That two American children of fifteen of supposedly normal nature should become involved in an illicit love affair, and while perfectly aware of the nature of their action should consider it not only not reprehensible, but perfectly inevitable, would be a tragedy; if it were not it would be disgusting. Now M. Birabeau's play is a comedy, and it is not disgusting—it is not because it is utterly unreal. Never for a moment do we believe in either of these children. And it isn't because they are poorly played, for Montgomery Clift and especially Lois Hall play them with great delicacy. That they do not make their psychology believable is because that psychologly is completely false. M. Birabeau says his children are Parisians; they are really children of the moon—or perhaps of the South Sea Islands. If we accept them as such the play has its moments of whimsy and sentiment and the last act is excellent theatre. But don't let M. Birabeau persuade you that he is writing about the reactions of Parisian fifteen-year-olds. After all France is the oldest of civilized nations, perhaps at bottom the most civilized. M. Birabeau is simply a playwright with an eye on the box-office. The play is as well adapted as it is possible by Patricia Collinge, and beautifully played by Miss Hall, Mr. Clift, Harry Irvine, Onslow Stevens and Jessie Royce Landis. (At the Booth Theatre.)

Kiss the Boys Goodbye

CLARE BOOTHE in "The Women" despised her fellow women; in "Kiss the Boys Goodbye" she hates her fellow men. So at least the record now is even. "The Women" was a comedy in which there was only one decent woman; "Kiss the Boys Goodbye" is a farce in which there is only one decent man. A rotter of a movie director brings a Southern belle to a Westport house-party, so as to disgust a rotter of a movie producer with all Southern women, and thus persuade him to give a rotter of a movie actress the chief part in a Southern film. But the Southern belle though continually insulted by all the men but one, holds the fort and in the end gets the contract. She makes the play really amusing, because the part is amusingly written, with a malicious though exaggerated truth, and is gorgeously played by a young actress named Helen Claire. Miss Boothe has again soaked her typewriter-ribbon in vitriol. There are many laughs but they are always cruel ones. Her farce will undoubtedly succeed, but it would have had a greater success if she had tempered her justice with mercy—and with truth. Men aren't all, even publishers and movie directors, like the things we find squirm-

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ing when a rock is lifted. Besides Miss Claire's, admirable performances are given by Edwin Nicander, Frank Wilson, Ollie Burgoyne, Philip Ober, Millard Mitchell and Sheldon Leonard. Brock Pemberton has cast the whole play splendidly, and Antoinette Perry has directed it well. (At the Henry Miller Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Travel Vicariously Via Movies

DRUMS and guns and marching Indians and Britishers against some gorgeous Indian mountains in good Technicolor are the background for Alexander Korda's production "Drums." Based on a story by A. E. W. Mason, this picture turns out to be another of those very English affairs full of "stout fellas" who will save the Empire at any cost, no matter how dull their proceedings may be in the films. Fortunately Sabu, the young Indian whose charm and acting in "Elephant Boy" made such a stir, comes to the rescue whenever you get too bored with English bravery and English history-in-the-making. On the Northwest Frontier of India, Raymond Massey, as Prince Ghul, plots to unite the tribes and force out the British. With a great deal of sneering, he is almost successful, but is finally outwitted by Sabu and the British Army. Sabu's diction and acting have both improved since "Elephant Boy"; however they and the beautiful scenery are not enough to make "Drums" the kind of a picture we have a right to expect from Mr. Korda. Perhaps Noel Coward is right: only mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the mid-day sun.

Packed with thrills that take you from the midst of the war in China to the burning and sinking of an ammunition ship in the Atlantic, and finally to the heart of impenetrable South America where a Voodoo tribe is in full action, "Too Hot to Handle" shows how photographers risk all dangers to obtain their shots. Clark Gable and Walter Pidgeon are the two boys; each of whom does not care what methods he uses to cut the other's throat to get a scoop for his own company. Myrna Loy, who pilots the boys in their flights over disasters, complicates their lives by being their love interest. "Too Hot to Handle" keeps you on the edge of your chair with its speed and climax after climax. Like most adventure pictures, however, its story and acting can't bear too close scrutiny.

It is interesting to contrast the Hollywoodism and kid's stuff in "Too Hot to Handle" with the real thing in "Dark Rapture." Except for its exaggerated blurbs and sensational advertising, "Dark Rapture" stays close to facts and remains as thrilling as anything manufactured in a studio. Filmed on the Denis-Roosevelt Belgian Congo expedition, this picture takes you into darkest Africa where you see such excitements as the capture and training of wild elephants, the torturous secret initiation of boys into manhood, pigmies building a bridge and hunting their game, and the expedition itself fleeing before a forest fire. The beautiful costumes and advanced dancing of the seven-foot giants are amazing. However, be sure that you can take it before you watch the pigmies devour an elephant or see the performing of some of the more inhuman rites.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Day

A Spiritual Odyssey

Listen! The Wind, by Anne Morrow Lindbergh. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

"NORTH TO THE ORIENT" was (and is) a fine book, but this one is finer. The first was, is, and will be for many years capitivating from beginning to end, well-written, vivid, memorable. "Listen! The Wind" has all the splendid qualities of its predecessor—and yet it has more.

It is throughout a more concentrated piece of work, covering the close-packed incidents of a flight between Africa and South America, a flight which took the three days of November 27, November 30 and December 6 in the year 1933 and which extended from Rio de Oro to Santiago, in the Cape Verde Islands, from Santiago back to Bathurst in Gambia, and from Bathurst by night and day flying over the South Atlantic to Natal in Brazil. But the actual space and time covered in those three days is so set against eternal Time and Space that the book takes upon itself, through the genius of the author, a spiritual quality which "North to the Orient" with all its excellencies lacked in comparison.

It is this quality which lends greatness to "Listen! The Wind." The book from beginning to end is not so much a recital of experiences, most interesting in themselves, as it is a study of emotions, perceptions, swift understandings. It has all the characteristics of the best in fiction, of life made more real than real life ever is; and yet its actual story is its least important part. The people in it, the "Chef" or Porto Praia, his thin, tragic little wife, the mechanic with his brown sweater and his fever, these suddenly populate the Cape Verde Islands for those of us who have never thought of them in connection with people. And yet with all their reality they are unreal in comparison with the emotions which they kindle and set flame within us. The jagged cliffs of the islands themselves, "bare, brown, broken-off scraps of the African continent," are real, and yet they are unreal against the space around and above them. The wind, constantly blowing from some remote, unknown point in this universe of space, makes them insignificant and inconsiderable even while they form a haven of security, even while they afford the simple and indispensable necessities of food, fuel and unwelcome shelter.

For this book, seemingly so packed with the real, the definite, the practical, the obvious, deals with larger necessities than they. Two persons fly through space, dependent upon the wind, the moon, the stars, and so sensible are they of this larger dependence that their flight becomes a kind of spiritual Odyssey transcending weariness, cracked lips, aching heads, all the physical vicissitudes of life as most of us know it. Waiting, for instance, becomes a "broken-off, detached piece of time, suspended in mid-air, hovering." The people of Santiago upon the plane's taking-off become "a part of the past and looking down on them was looking down at life from the altitude of death."

Comparisons such as these free the imagination, invigorate and vitalize it. Perhaps, indeed, the author's fine and sensitive use of similes contributes more than any other one feature to the impression, to the effect of the whole. The wind is "life up there hurrying by, a great

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stream, tumbling, turning, sparkling"; again it is "a many-stranded stream of sound, a river that had its deep current and its small eddies." Again she writes: "Only one point of land down the coast—the plumed head of a palm, the jagged outline of a rock—reached out like a last articulately formed word against the great dark speechless stretch of ocean."

Power in literature, according to DeQuincey, is that quality which enlarges man's capacity for sympathy with the infinite. One remembers that fine and sensitive definition in reading a certain sentence in "Listen! The Wind," a sentence which holds within its few words the center and soul of the book itself. "The pendulum of the mind swings first overland; then, wider over the seas; and finally stretches to take in its company the sky."

MARY ELLEN CHASE.

CRITICISM

The Journals of Bronson Alcott; edited by Odell Shepard. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $5.00.

ALTHOUGH the volume of Bronson Alcott's journals is a goodly book of some five hundred pages, the editor says in his foreword that he has used only a twentieth of the entire material, which comprises some fifty notebooks. It must have been a monumental task to choose what to use and what to omit. Mr. Shepard has wisely chosen the parts which refer to Alcott's family life and to generous selections from his musings on education, reform and religion, and to references of the noted men of the day with whom Alcott walked and talked—Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne and the rest. And in the middle of the book he has inserted pages from the diary of Alcott's loving, bewildered wife. It is illuminating to compare her jottings with those of her husband on kindred topics. "I should like," she wrote, "to have my husband a little more interested in this matter of support. I love his quiet reliance on Divine Providence . . . but working for bread does not necessarily imply unworthy gain." And from Fruitlands she wrote, "Give me one day of practical philosophy. It is worth a century of speculation and discussion."

But Bronson Alcott felt that ideals must be preserved, for they were worth all costs. It did not seem to be important to him that his children sometimes went hungry, if only their minds were being fed with truth. And it was not that he did not try to work either. The children in the various schools he opened loved his teaching and throve under it. It was not his fault that his schools failed. Once it was because he refused to take a Negro child from his benches, but usually it was because he was far ahead of his day in inductive education. To a present-day progressive school he would be a great asset, but to the doubting Thomases of his day he was only an irreverent free thinker. "There is little hope for mankind," he wrote, "except in forming the young, and I am prohibited from communicating with them. How am I to work?" Yet in his later years when, ironically enough, it did not matter whether he made any money or not, for Louisa was making so much, he collected from his lectures as much as $1,200 a year.

Mr. Shepard in his biography of Alcott published last year, told in fictional style what here is simple fact, and somehow out of this purely subjective book there emerges even more clearly than in "Pedlar's Progress" the great mental debt which Emerson owed this unassuming man. Alcott kept for him a great affection, which sometimes amounted almost to reverence, and which at others showed plainly he knew when Emerson was not being entirely logically coherent. Alcott was aware that Emerson sometimes adapted his conversation to his own essays. But he had a sort of fatherly pride in Emerson and his writing, and when he speaks of this one of his deepest charms is most apparent—his great humility. Alcott planted his thoughts and cared little who reaped them. He wanted only to make sure they were garnered and used. But when Emerson harvested a crop he put it up in parcels to sell like a thrifty Yankee. Alcott gave away everything—it was his whole life. Yet Emerson helped his friend in solid ways—with a trip to England, with aid in putting the improvident Alcotts in a house of their own.

As one reads these journals, one becomes more and more aware of what reality there is in them, how firm a grasp Alcott had on the universal and eternal even though the practical and immediate might often elude him. "You can never hurry mankind," he wrote, "goad them never so fiercely. Expect brute resistance. No measures will avail that have their sources in the mere animal will. Organic changes are wrought by spiritual powers."

KATHERINE BURTON.

Mozart, by W. J. Turner. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $4.00.

WHY SHOULD there be another biography of Mozart? Or, for that matter, of Goethe, Keats, Bach and all of the classic figures of man's culture—all of whom are well biographed. The resurgence of biographic interest, somewhat peculiar to this decade, points the answer: an abiding if sometimes wavering and flagging interest in and pursuit of abiding culture, classic culture. And a modern biography of a classic subject can be as enlightening as a candid-camera shot of one we had known only from the daguerreotype, painting or engraving. Mr. Turner's study from England of the musical seraph, Mozart, does this service to the meteoric, thirty-five-year-old, eighteenth-centuy composer. Mr. Turner also does a greater service to the twentieth-century reader, to whom Mozart now stands as fresh and contemporary as Masaryk and Benes, Lee Sims's tone-poem, "Blythewood," or a dinner date at the Samba Room of El Rio Club with Lucius Beebe, Cole Porter or Danton Walker—or Virginia Bruce.

In addition to the new slant on Mozart which Mr. Turner's handsome monograph presents, the less-racy scholar has not been overlooked, much previously unavailable material, new translations of the well-known correspondence of the Mozart family, together with many passages therein first done into English, being included; not to mention that librarians' holiday: a complete catalogue of Mozart's work as an appendix.

History has strange ways of repeating itself; of returning with the same coat, worn inside out. The Rome-Berlin axis is old stuff, tonally (and to all the arts and sciences); Mozart was the last of the great German musicians to study and drink at the fountain of Italian musical culture—rather, Latin culture. And, as if in climax to the bright line of Handel, Gluck, J. C. Bach and the host of lesser Teuton lights supporting these monumental musicians, Mozart synthesized once for all the great virtues of these two seemingly opposite streams of culture. Perhaps Hitler and Mussolini should let Mr. Chamberlain read his countryman's "Mozart" to them—at Salzburg!

WALTER ANDERSON.

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FICTION

With Malice toward Some, by Margaret Halsey. Illustrated by Peggy Bacon. New York: Simon and Schuster. $2.00.

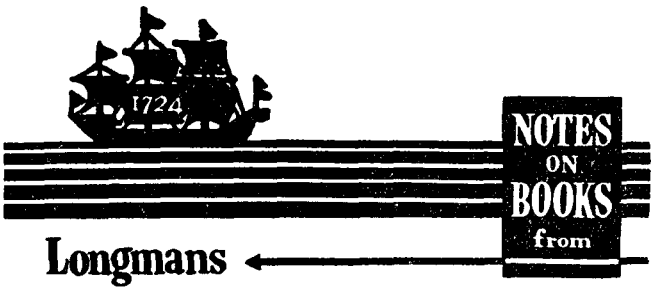
THAT our tense old world has been tenser than usual and quite hungrily in need of a laugh during the past few months, probably explains why the United States portion of it has so voraciously consumed "With Malice toward Some." Otherwise its appeal would surely have been to the large but by no means universal public which finds its chief theatrical delight in the more rowdy George Abbott farces—one of which Mrs. Halsey seems predestined to write in the near future. For she is past mistress of the deft and devastating wisecrack, and quite aggressively funny in spite of—not, as she seems to imagine, because of—some entirely superfluous coarseness.

Her book, as most people know by this time, is the supposed diary of a young American professor's wife during her first visit to Europe. Apparently she was interested in the Scandinavian countries and obviously she enjoyed the cheerfulness of the Paris cafés, so her malice is reserved mainly for the right-little-tight-little isle where "Henry" had engaged to pass the teaching season. Well, England has her "little ways," as Christopher Robin remarks of King John. There is nothing very novel in being reminded that it rains there a good deal and the houses are chilly, that the cooking and the Sundays leave something to be desired and that English women do not dress as well as American women—or as Englishmen. But when Mrs. Halsey observes that the English landscape was "evidently custom-tailored by Alfred Lord Tennyson," or chatters cheerily about the "good juicy tombs" in Westminster Abbey, or declares that the shadow of Exeter Cathedral "lies across the life of the town like Welsh rabbit on a delicate stomach," finally summing up her working proposition "that the countryside would melt in your mouth and the gentry will not melt in hell"—and adding for good measure her approval of the "pleasant help-yourself cafeteria feeling" about Chartres Cathedral during a midnight Mass—one is prepared for the worst.

If you happen to have had pretty good times in John Bull's Island you may be a little surprised to be assured that the "gentry" are "consistently and unendurably insulting" to Americans, and that Englishmen—of all romantic creatures!—never bother to look at or talk to women. And you may lift your eyebrows at the author's description of being snubbed at the cocktail party of a London publisher. But after all, when one meets repeated snubbing or stupidity—either at home or abroad—it must be either because one has not chosen one's company well or else because one hasn't made a very good impression. Usually the English are mildly amused by "smart-alec New Yorkers"—as Mrs. Halsey defines herself and Henry—but do not care for them in more than homeopathic doses. Neither, for that matter, do some other Americans! And one gets the impression that she must have been a rather questionable asset to an exchange professor, in spite of the harvest of laughs and of dollars being reaped by these highly publicized pages. KATHERINE BRÉGY.

In Hazard, by Richard Hughes. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

"IN HAZARD" is certainly a novel about a storm. It is a hurricane of the most heroic possible proportions, breaking anemometers and registering unchronicled lows on the barometer, so violent and overwhelming



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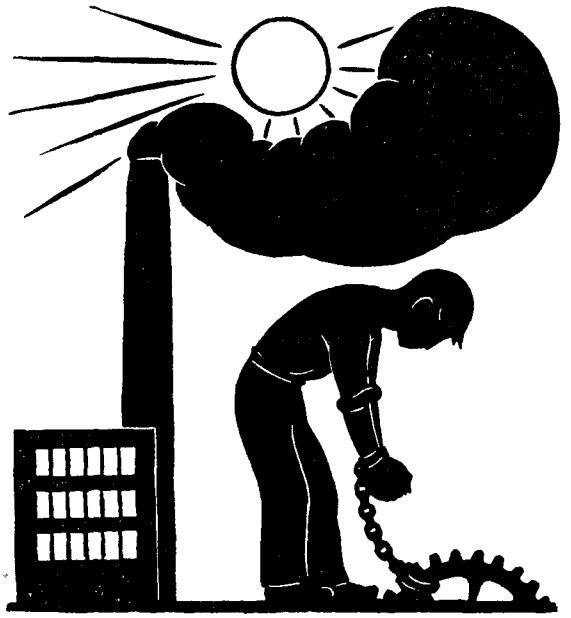

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that the recent blow on the Northeast coast would seem anticlimactic. But it seems a purposeful book too, as if it had a theme and was not only—what it is at least—a brilliant tour de force. Richard Hughes's first novel, published seven years ago, "A High Wind in Jamaica," was also a brilliant and tricky book with like irony and more maliciousness, but also it was one which seemed to have some other importance too. His play, the "Comedy of Good and Evil," produced last winter in New York on an informal scale, although written more as a closet drama some years ago, was still more extremely a stunt and yet concerned directly with morality. It is difficult to know how seriously Mr. Hughes takes morality, even if he clearly finds it a fascinating object.

"In Hazard" carries the sound and modern ship, Archimedes, of the excellent Sage Line, through the most appalling Caribbean hurricane. The modernness of the ship makes it pathetically helpless under extreme adversity. It depends tragically on the ability of Mr. MacDonald, the chief engineer, and his subordinate officers and Chinese crew to keep up steam and electricity from the steam. This proves spectacularly impossible, just after the automatic steering machinery goes bad. From then on the fine ship and excellent personnel of eighty are at the mercy of a wind that passes 200 miles per hour. The narrative progresses with care and stylistic objectivity never very far from irony. There is a periodic unexplained "I" in the story, the writer whose position toward what happens is symbolically indefinite. It is mostly third person narrative. There is no real protagonist. The center of the novel is the hurricane and this makes the actions and changes of the characters of ambiguous importance; everything human happens as near the periphery as the center. Dick Watchett, a young officer precipitately matured by a shore bout in Norfolk and the tension of the storm, is slightly the most important character. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald furnishes the closest approximation to tragedy, but there can be no full tragedy in so ironically proportioned a novel. Captain Edwardes could be made a hero, but is not so made by Richard Hughes. Mr. Rabb has a soul that could be pictured as villainous, but one is forced rather to admire his own recognition of his own fear, if not his rationalization of it. The Marxist, or "bandit," Chinaman, Ao Ling, is faintly pitiful, but more deluded.

The development of these and the other characters delays to a remarkably small extent the straight story of the storm. Formal explanations and almost technical descriptions also interrupt the wind from time to time, but the tour de force is that neither of these distractions seriously upsets the biography of the hurricane. Although a fairly short book, and a quickly read one, it is still a little too long. It is dangerous for anyone to write stunts, even when they are so successful and thoroughly interesting that the reader is never sure to what extent they are stunts. This novel is a good one and successful, but on reflection it still appears that Richard Hughes is fundamentally more interested in his excellent technique of writing, his good style and daring choice and construction than in the human or philosophic elements he dwells on—or utilizes—with Welsh ease but indefiniteness, nearly mystery. The passage late in the book on Virtue, and the virtues, trained by kinds of work and the relationship of this Virtue to present economy is precise and significant. But it is not as important as the exciting story of the wind.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

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The Old Parish, by Doran Hurley. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.00.

DORAN HURLEY does for the Irish Catholic New Englanders what Sarah Orne Jewett and Mary Wilkins Freeman did for Protestant Yankees in New England, what Margaret Deland did for "Dr. Lavendar's People" in Pennsylvania, what George Cable did in "Old Creole Days" for the older generation in New Orleans. The tales of "The Old Parish" are steeped in Catholic tradition, and have great charm in their sly humor and homey quality. Sentimental, perhaps; yet and too often with a tear and a dash of too much goodness; but the stories are well rounded and have a healthy feeling for folk-lore.

You won't find Millington on a map of New England, but you will recognize its plain, simple Old Parish people who are proud of their faith and heritage and Americanism. It is particularly in the portrayal of these good Irish folk that Mr. Hurley is gifted. He uses his stories merely as illustrations to point out the characteristics of his parishioners — and a more delightful group of American Catholics you could not ask for.

There's Johnny Sullivan who became a Papal Zouave after serving in the Civil War here because the A.P.A.s were acting very nasty to the Holy Father and taking away all his real estate; there's Larry O'Toole, who was a nephew to a saint, on his father's side, and so was an authority on spiritual matters; there's Aggie Kelly, president of the Children of Mary, who has been on every committee since she left Sunday school; there's Mrs. Patrick Crowley, whose pride was fast and deep but not false, who ruled the parish ladies until the new pastor put her gently in her place; and there's James Kielty and Dinnie Shea and Constance Casey and many other lovable characters whose insularity was finally broken down. Several of Mr. Hurley's tales are told in the first person and have a slight tone of nostalgic sadness: "the days that are gone, boys, gone"; but the keynote of this amusing book is struck in the first story when the author observes: "Laity and gaiety rhyme well." PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Trial of Helen McLeod, by Alice Beal Parsons. New York: Funk and Wagnalls. $2.50.

THIS book, although well conceived, seems to me to miss distinction all the way through. Its title promises if not drama at least suspense, yet the story itself, too clogged with irrelevancies, is barely interesting. Surely indictment, ostracism, conspiracy, desertion and eventual acquittal should make for excitement, particularly when a faithful lover hovers about, but they do not except in the presence of one character—Clarence Darrow. Outside of him, the characters, although numerous, are not convincing. In fact it is probably their over-abundance, as well as an unfortunate and labored style, that tends to make the story sluggish.

The book concerns a well-to-do young matron in a smug and prosperous Midwestern town, who, with the best of intentions but without ever having a complete understanding of the party's tenets, suddenly becomes active for the Socialist cause. Finally, together with a group of laborers, she is indicted for conspiracy to overthrow the government of the United States. She is denounced as a traitor by those of her class and as a menace by all who resent examination of the social order. The few who speak in her defense suffer both social and economic pen-

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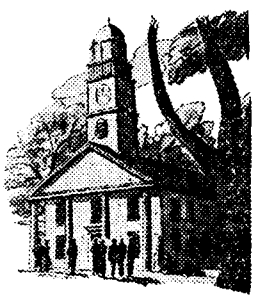

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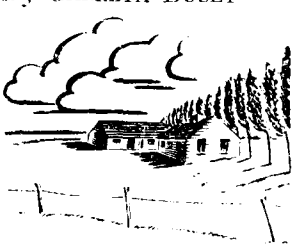

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alties. Eventually Darrow consents to defend her and wins her acquittal. Only those who, like the author, are his admirers, will find enough in this book to justify its reading. VIRGINIA CHASE PERKINS.

HISTORY

Photography and the American Scene, by Robert Taft. New York: The Macmillan Company. $10.00.

IT SEEMS astonishing that there has never before been a history of photography in this country, when you consider that there are some 39,000 professional photographers here, some 15,000,000 amateurs, and that all the rest of the population get most of their entertainment from motion pictures and their education from halftones. And it is fitting that Robert Taft, a professor of chemistry, should now write the history, for of course it was out of chemistry that photography came, and many of its first practitioners in America and elsewhere were chemists. Fortunately Professor Taft is both a scholar who understands the technique of research and the value of accuracy, and also a man who appreciates the picturesque and who can write entertainingly. The first description of Daguerre's process reached New York in September, 1839, and almost at once several men, including Samuel F. B. Morse (already busy with his telegraph) and John W. Draper, who taught chemistry in City College, started experimenting. In March, 1840, a New Yorker named Seager, who had already held an exhibition of daguerreotypes, published the first exposure table in history. The shortest time, noon of a brilliant sunny day, was five minutes! Yet already Morse, Draper and the rest were trying to take portraits! Who took the first successful portrait seems in doubt, but it is truly astonishing to find that in June, 1840, Morse took a picture of his class at their Yale reunion, unquestionably the first class photograph ever made. America applied its Yankee ingenuity to the problems of photography with immediate enthusiasm and speedily had invented cameras, reflectors, more sensitive plates, etc., which so reduced exposure time that in a very few years the making of daguerreotype portraits had become a lucrative profession. There seems to be no doubt that our portraits in every way were far superior (and far cheaper) than those made in Europe, and they were so popular that within a decade at least 3,000,000 a year were being turned out. Those made of public men by the famous Brady of New York constitute one of our most valuable historical records. Mr. Taft suggests, wisely, that it would be not only interesting but highly useful, to collect and preserve daguerreotypes. He tells how to restore them.

So he passes on through the myriad experimental stages to wet plates on glass, laboriously prepared by the photographer who had to take his dark room around with him; to stereopticon views (another chance for collectors); to dry plates; to the forerunners of the movies; to the fascinating story of the invention of film and the modern speed camera. All this is copiously illustrated with reproductions of old photographs, many of them very rare, from the earliest daguerreotypes to those Civil War pictures taken by Brady and his staff and the astonishing early views of the great West, taken by men who had to carry not only camera, tripod, glass plates, but a dark room and chemicals, up mountain sides and down cañons, in order to take them.

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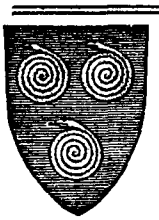

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The Captain's Chair, by Robert Flaherty. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

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PHILIP H. WILLIAMS.

MISCELLANEOUS

Racial Proverbs: A Selection of the World's Proverbs Arranged Alphabetically, by Selwyn Gurney Chapman, M.D. New York: The Macmillan Company. $10.00.

DR. CHAPMAN'S scholarly work, which is the product of twenty-seven years' research in the folk-lore and writings of as many countries and races, gives us for the first time "choice" proverbs of all peoples. Those which are "stupid, silly, commonplace" have been eliminated, yet the volume comprises nearly 800 pages. Continental divisions are subdivided into various racial groups and a method of setting in prominent type the salient word of the proverb simplifies the alphabetical arrangement. Under Asia is a special section on religions, giving proverbs from Buddhism, Christianity, etc. African language families have an explanatory map. Of particular interest under America are Negro sayings from the United States and the West Indies. Much valuable information is contained in the author's introduction, and chief linguistic divisions each have an introduction by a scholar in that language, making even more interesting this vast panorama of human nature, for in these pithy phrases are revealed racial characteristics. The book will provide many a pleasant hour of reading and is an important adjunct to any library. Well could we all profit by Confucianism's "If we could all be courteous for even a single day the hatreds of humanity would turn to love," and the Japanese "One good word can warm three winter months." C. N.

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VARIOUS MOVEMENTS to improve the moral tone of the movies and the stage have for some years tended to make Catholics think in terms of Catholic films and a Catholic drama. There have been those who questioned the wisdom of attempting to produce art in terms which might be too narrowly conceived; in the late Middle Ages the Church felt it necessary to disassociate herself from the drama which she had created through the mystery plays; the drama had come of age, and it was no longer seemly for an art which is generally secular and worldly to be under the patronage of an institution whose primary concern must be spiritual. Now the worldly excesses of the drama seem to be driving the Church to take home her prodigal and cleanse him.

In the United States there have been a number of Catholic theatre groups and associations of which one of the most active is the Catholic Dramatic Movement of Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. This organization has at its head the Reverend Mathias Helfen. Connected with it is the Catholic Dramatic Guild, a membership group which supplies plays, rents costumes, gives technical advice, and likewise publishes a magazine, *Practical Stage Work*. The Movement also provides a training school in the drama for prospective actors, parochial and school dramatic directors, etc. The summer course during the last season was held at Marquette University; the present fall term courses are being given in Oconomowoc. The subjects available are acting, directing, voice, stage crafts, oral interpretation, make-up, public speaking, costuming, scene designing, play production and stage lighting. Students conduct a repertory theatre and thus participate in every art connected with the stage. It is at present planned to make a movie, in which will participate students in the training course as well as certain others who are members of the "home group" of actors in Oconomowoc. A recently appointed member of the staff of the school is Dr. Walter Volbach, a distinguished German actor, critic and manager.

CONTRIBUTORS

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THE POLITICAL CAUSES OF INTERNATIONAL DISORDER, by Monsignor John A. Ryan, suggests the principles on which a genuine concert of the nations can be formed. He thereby points the way for reestablishing the international morale which was so badly shattered by the recent Czech crisis.

"THE MOST VITAL MOVEMENT" by Emerson Hynes, is a charmingly informal and informative article on the recent Catholic Rural Life meeting at Vincennes, Indiana. Mr. Hynes persuasively conveys his conviction that various elements in this movement are of paramount importance for the future of the Church in America.

RUSSIAN EXILE, by Nathalie Troubetskoy, is a lively account of an Italian train ride with a family of Italian blood returning to more sunny climes after years of exile in Russian Turkestan.

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